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jiu-jitsu™ magazine

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+ BACK TAKES WITH IAN SANDERS
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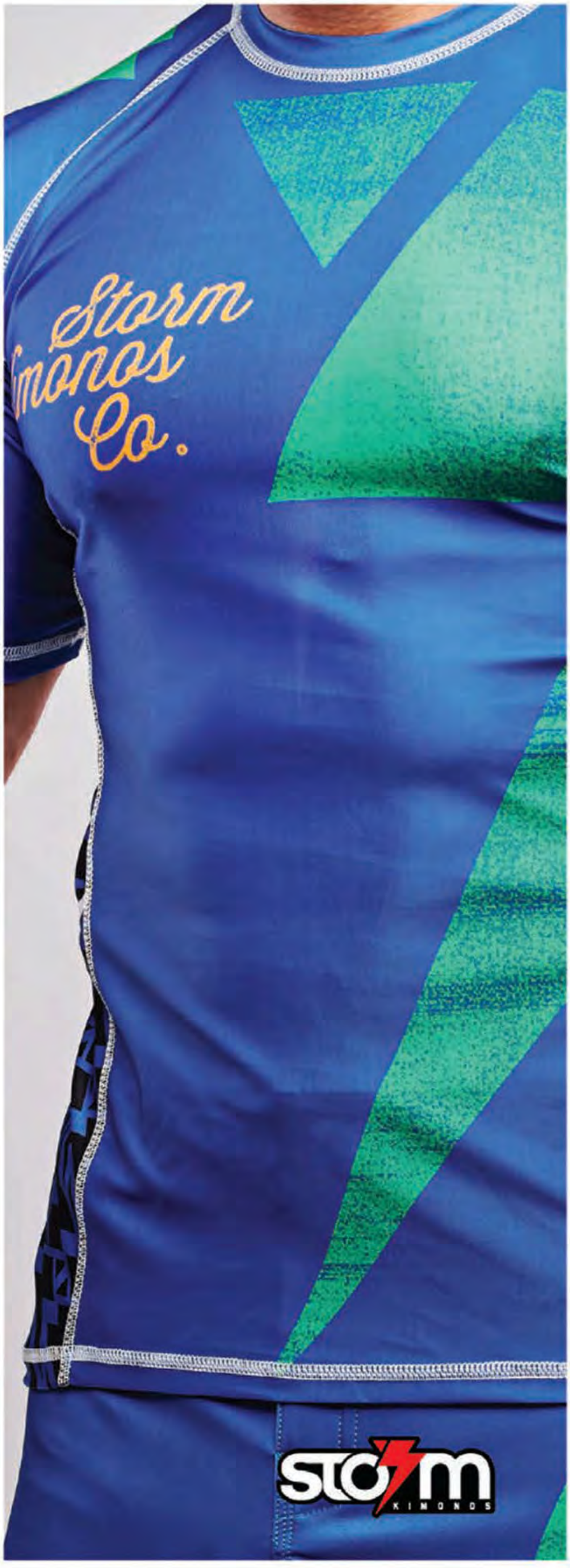
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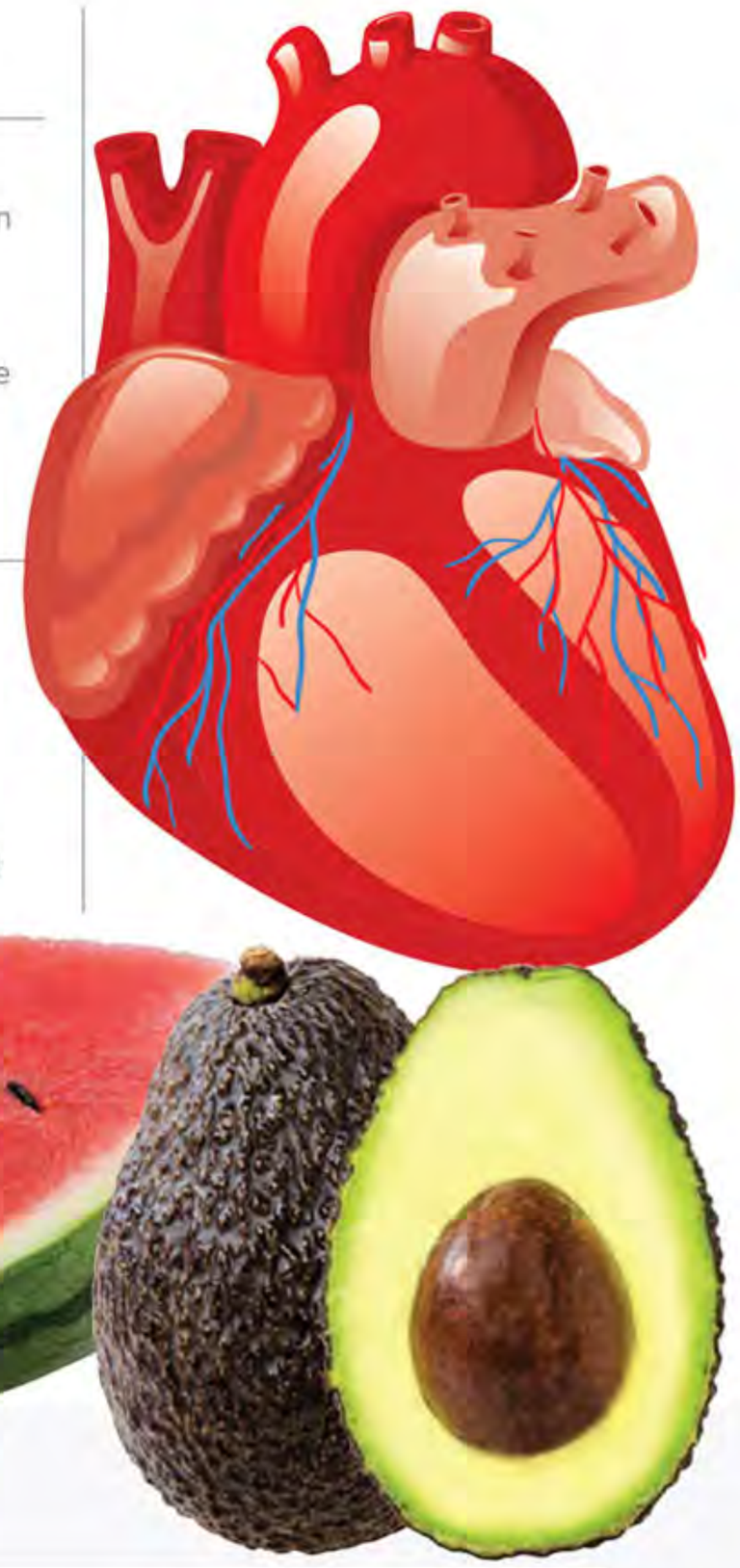

MEET THE EXPERTS

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ON THE COVER

The entire Storm Team on hand to share their best advice. Photo: Richie Knapp

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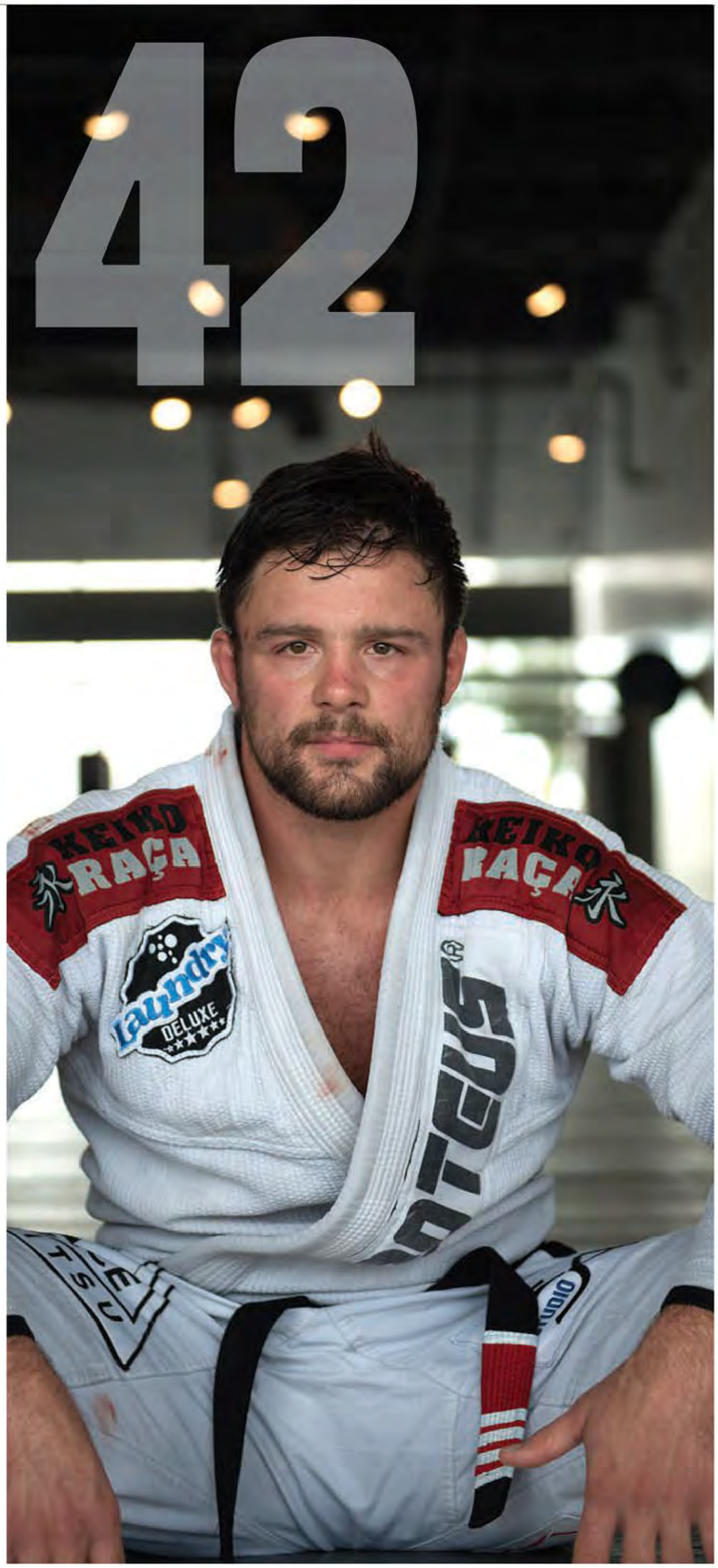

EDITORIAL

WE MADE IT!

WELCOME TO 2017! SEEMS LIKE JUST YESTERDAY WE WERE WORRIED ABOUT Y2K DESTROYING THE PLANET, THEN THERE WAS THAT PESKY MAYAN CALENDAR BACK IN 2012, BUT WHEW, WE MADE IT. I don't know about you, but I'm feeling pretty upbeat about the New Year. In the Chinese calendar, this year is the year of the Rooster. When I went to look this up I was hoping it would be something that would work with a jiu-jitsu analogy, maybe the snake, or even the tiger, but it was the rooster. With the snake I could talk about the anaconda and how it chokes his adversaries. Or with the tiger I could talk about its cunning and patience. Having not grown up on or near a farm, all I really know about roosters is that they're loud in the morning and like to fight. However, now that I think about it, I guess you could draw some similarities to jiu-jitsu. But getting back to 2017, so what does the year of the rooster bring according to Chinese legend? The rooster is the sign of dawn and awakening and that triumph and success can only be achieved at the price of hard work and patience in 2017. Furthermore, rooster years are said to be a blend of righteousness and justice, bombast, and logistical efficien . It sounds like 2017 is the year of jiu-jitsu! Anyone who's practiced jiu-jitsu for more than a few months knows that hard work and patience are essential for success. Righteousness and justice, there is righteousness in jiu-jitsu, its common commandments will guide you to the promised land while being overly righteous can lead to swift justice being brought upon you. Or, if you attempt to take short cuts, you'll be met with justice on the other side. Bombast, for better or for worse, there's been a lot of bombastic talk lately surrounding some well known grapplers; however, we all know that logistical efficien usually leads to victory in jiu-jitsu. To back up this theory, that 2017 is the year of jiu-jitsu, I took a look at Google Trends to see how it's doing these days. Wouldn't you know? The popularity of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu in the last twelve years just saw a new peak this past September. So what can we all do to help further this along and turn my theory into a self-fulfilling prophecy? How about we all resolve to help bring one new friend into jiu-jitsu. We all know one or twenty people that could use jiu-jitsu in their lives. Like our Success story this month, Ross Landry, jiu-jitsu saved him from one of the toughest times in his life. Let's make this the year of Jiu-Jitsu!

Happy New Year!

MIKE VELEZ
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jiu-jitsu magazine

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TRAIN FOR LIFE

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WEIGHING IN

A GI WITH A CAUSE

FOR YEARS, FIGHT FAMILY HAS BEEN PRODUCING THE SUBMISSION CIRCUIT SERIES OF TOURNAMENTS IN THE BUFFALO, NEW YORK AREA. EACH EVENT RAISES MONEY FOR A SPECIAL CAUSE DESIGNATED PRIOR TO EACH EVENT. Over the years they've managed to raise thousands of dollars for non-profit youth development programs and foster care programs. Now, Fight Family is spreading their good work around the globe, but not with a tournament but with a gi. The new Buzz Competition gi might look like any other gi, but it does something no other gi does, it helps kids. The Buzz gi is a 450 GSM pearl weave gi with double and triple contrast stitching, 10 oz ripstop pants, clean styling, and all the features you'd expect from a quality gi. It's available in white, black, and blue and is competitively priced at $129.99. Where it's unique is the cause behind it. For every two gis sold, Fight Family will donate a third gi, or the equivalent amount in cash, to one of a few select non-profit youth development jiu-jitsu groups. Some partners include Vector Jiu-Jitsu in Jackson, Missouri, The Terere Kids Project in Brazil, and Community BJJ in Buffalo, New York. These

organizations do real good for their local communities while teaching underprivileged kids the unique and truly life changing benefits of jiu-jitsu. So the next time you're due for a new gi, take a look at the Buzz from Fight Family and do good for jiu-jitsu while upgrading your mat wardrobe.

fightfamily.com

YOU WILL COME TO ORDER!

Here in the states when we hear the name Judge Dredd, the first thing that probably comes to mind is the 90's movie of the same name starring Sylvester Stallone, and if you saw it you'd probably want to forget it. Well, over in the UK, Judge Dredd is a beloved comic book character who is actually a pretty big deal and pretty badass. Judge Dredd is a Street Judge assigned to patrol Mega-City One and appointed to instantly convict, sentence, and execute those that have committed an offense against the people of Mega-City One. He is armed with the Lawgiver pistol programmed to only recognize the Judge's palm-print. He rides the Lawmaster motorcycle equipped with plenty of useful implements to help carry out justice. All of this is very entertaining, but you're probably wondering, what does this have to do with jiu-jitsu? Well, one of our favorite brands, Scramble, has collaborated with the creators of Judge Dredd to release these four new shirts from the Scramble X Judge Dredd Collection. Each features licensed and accurately replicated artwork from the comic with a touch of Scramble style and quality. Each is available here in the states for $39.99, a bargain for works of art of this caliber. Don't get caught being in contempt, pick one up today!

scramblestuff.us

Mess With Their Heads

Want to mess with your opponent's head? Get them all disoriented and lose any ability to judge distance? Of course you do, that would be fun. That's just what you'll do if you're wearing this new Prism rashguard from Tatami Fightwear. The Prism is part of a new no-gi collection of rashguards. Look for more details soon on their website.

tatamifightwear.com

WEIGHING IN

NEWBREED ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

NEW NEWBREED CHAMP!

NEWBREED Ultimate Challenge (NUC) had a packed house at the 4th Annual Universal Grappling Championship. The event took place on the 19th of November in sunny Orlando, Florida. The event drew competitors from across the country.

The Ultimate Grappler (TUG) 2016 Finale also took place at the tournament. The much anticipated event featured a stacked line up of elite athletes from all over the US including New York, New Jersey, Georgia and Florida just to name a few. There were eight competitors that qualified throughout the year and they all came well prepared to do battle and to see who would take home the crown. Some matches went the distance, but most were ended before the buzzer sounded thanks to some sick skills leading to submissions. The final match came down to Matt Serra protégé Jason Rau out of Long Island, NY, and Chase Davis out of Owensboro, KY, under the tutelage of leglock master and 2015 TUG finalist Joe Baize. Because the athletes were so evenly skilled, this was one of the matches that did, in fact, go the distance. The first four minutes of a TUG match is submission only so both guys were hunting for footlocks. There were some great scrambles but both of them were unsuccessful in their attempts. Once points started for the next four minutes, Jason swept Chase, passed his guard, then took his back. Jason ultimately won by points and was crowned The Ultimate Grappler 2016.

FOR MORE INFO ON THE 2017 NUC TOURNAMENT SERIES AND TUG GO TO **NUCGRAPPLING.COM.**

ON THE BUCKET LIST

Look good away from the mats with this new Bucket Hat from CTRL Industries. It's black, comfortable, and one-size fits most. It will help keep you in the shade when it's bright out. Available for $19.99.

ctrlindustries.com

NO LIMIT ON GAME

But limited in grey. This is the famous Gameness Pearl Gi that defines the term "simple and clean" when it comes to jiu-jitsu gis. It's constructed of 550 GSM pearl weave, features a rubber collar for fast drying, and cut with a seamless back for absolute comfort. The pants are made from a 12 oz cotton/poly blend for durability and comfort. The styling is clean and simple. What makes this gi unique is the color. Gameness rarely does limited edition models, so that makes this even more rare. It's colored in a deep grey that is sure to make you stand out in the crowd but in a cool, understated way. We all want that. Hurry, this is a limited edition gi available in eight different size variations from A0 to A5 with a stocky and long cut in there somewhere. For more details and to check on availability, head over to the Gameness site. And limited doesn't necessarily mean expensive, it's only $159.99. They'll definitely be more on eBay soon so don't wait!

gameness.com

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WEIGHING IN

EBI10 MEXICO

EBI went south for its tenth event. How far south? Mexico City!

GIOVANNI MARTINEZ WAS ON FIRE ON ALL HIS FOUR MATCHES ON HIS WAY TO WINNING HIS SECOND EBI EVENT. THE EDDIE BRAVO INVITATIONAL CROSSED THE BORDER TO HOST 16 OF THE BEST BANTAMWEIGHTS IN THE WORLD IN SEARCH OF THE ULTIMATE GLORY.

FIRST ROUND

Martinez was the first one on the mat and he quickly advanced to the second round after catching Kristian Woodmansee with a D'arce choke less than thirty seconds into the match. The other favorite, Eddie Cummings, EBI's featherweight champion, also had a lightening fast debut. Against Brazil's Alessandro Costa, the John Danaher's Death Squad member needed a little over one minute to have a heelhook in place and get the tap.

QUARTERFINALS

Martinez had to face Marcelo Cohen, who made it to the second round after catching Joey Diehl with a Kimura in little less than six minutes. In less than two minutes, Martinez found an opening to get the heelhook in place and secure his spot in the semifinals.

Cummings faced Alexis Alduncin in the second round. Fighting in his hometown, Alduncin made it to the quarterfinals with a first round win over Ashley Williams in two overtimes. In a less than three minutes of the match, Cummings was able to get the heelhook to make it to the semifinals.

SEMIFINALS

Ricky Lule first beat Javier Gomez with a heelhook in the first round and then caught Bruno Barbosa in a guillotine in the quarterfinals. With that, he made it to the semifinals against Geo Martinez. In a battle between 10th Planet teammates, Martinez imposed his black belt status over brown belt Lule. In a little less than six minutes, Martinez got to the mount, worked a Kimura, but ended finishing the match with an arm triangle.

Veteran Baret Yoshida made it to the semifinals with a first round win in one overtime against Eric Medina and a quarterfinals triumph over Arturo Rocha with an Ezekiel choke from the full mount. Cummings did not change his game plan and went right to his heelhook attacks. After a little over three minutes of scrambling, the opportunity for a clean lock appeared and Cummings did not waste it to make his way to the final.

THE FINALS

The final was a true chess match. Cummings went straight to his heelhook game while Martinez did his best to defend his legs during the regulation time. The final minute was incredibly thrilling as Cummings went for an armbar after taking Geo's back, but the Freakazoid managed to resist. As the ten minutes came to a close, the contest went into overtime. Martinez attacked first from the spider web position and ended in an arm crusher position. Cummings fought back for more than three minutes until Geo was finally able to transition to the armbar and get the tap. Eddie chose the back take for his first attack and immediately locked the body triangle. After that, a fierce struggle for position ensued, with Eddie trying to get a choke in place and Geo fighting for dear life. The title was decided when Cummings tried to transition for an armbar and Martinez was able to escape to secure the belt.

Cummings praised his opponent's defense during the match: "He didn't make any mistakes. I knew he had very good defense to my attacks to his legs. I think I tried the back take a little too late into the match." The reigning champion had this to say after the final win: "Viva Mexico! I knew I had to take Eddie into overtime. I know it's hard to put him in bad places during a match, so I knew my chance was to go to the death zones. For EBI, you have to train both your defense and your offense, and I was able to do just that," said Geo.

eddiebravoinvitational.com

Photos: Case Harts

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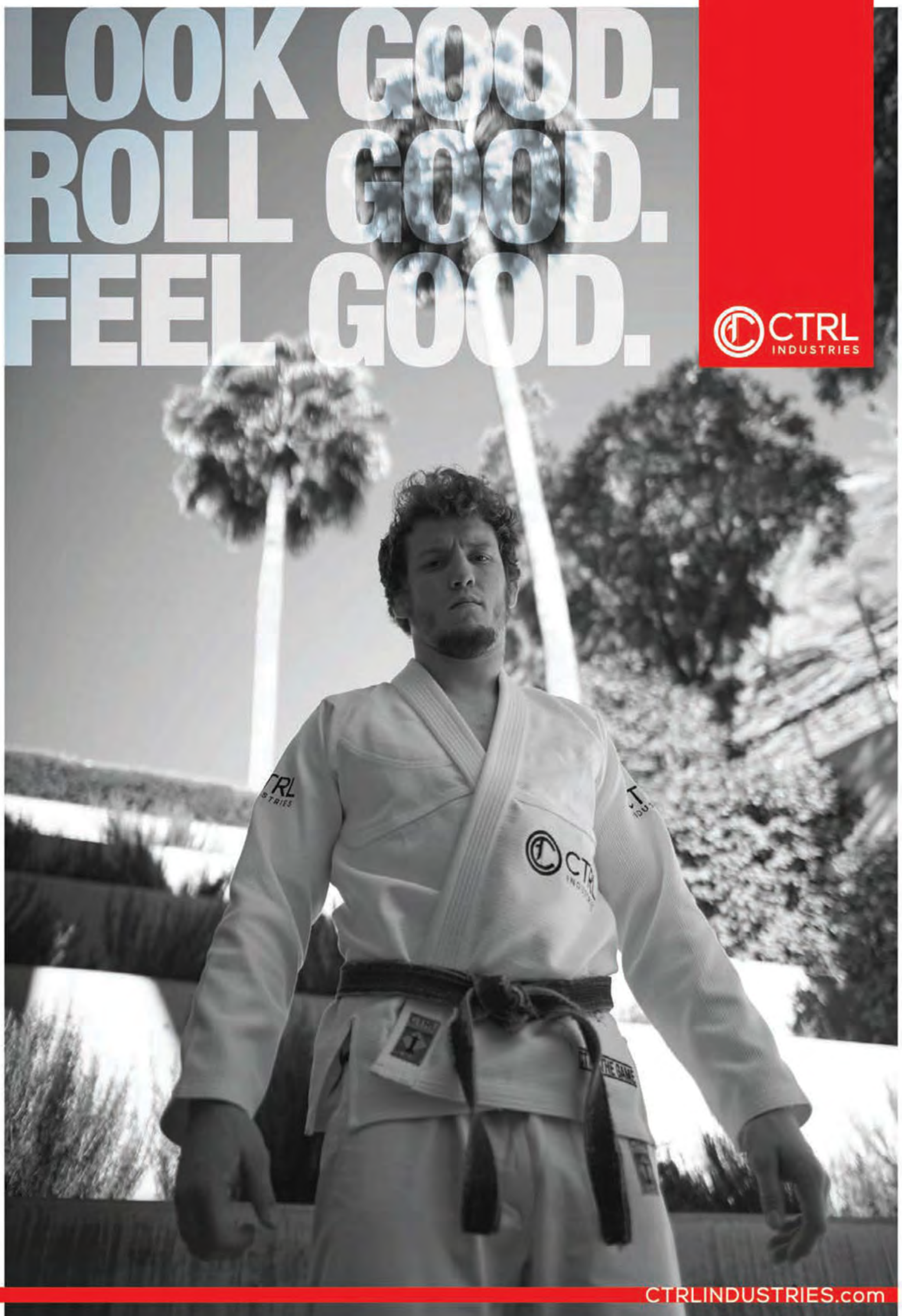

CTRLINDUSTRIES.com

WEIGHING IN

FREE JAPANESE LESSONS

In Japanese "suparaito" means "super light". What a fitting name for a Fuji's newest gi, the Suparaito. It's designed for competition and made to be both lightweight and tough. It's constructed of a lightweight cotton pearl weave with extra rows of stitching and triple reinforced ripstop pants that use a bungee cord drawstring. The collar is stiff and perfect for defending chokes! The Suparaito is IBJJF approved and comes in white with navy contrast, blue with green contrast, and black with silver. Sized from A0 to A6 and available for just $134.

fujisports.com

GAME OF ROLLS

If jiu-jitsu isn't fun enough for you, here's a way to make it just a bit more interesting. It's a new jiu-jitsu themed card game called Game of Rolls. It's easy to play, and you can adjust the level of complexity. Players will draw cards to see what types of submissions they're to shoot for along with positions as well. This randomized specific training helps the players to develop specific skills both offensively and defensively. There's no limit to the number of possible scenarios that can be determined by the game. The deck also doubles as a standard 52 playing card deck. The game's fun to play and adds a unique challenge. It's perfect for any school or grappler looking to add an element of surprise to their training. It's available on Amazon as well as on their website.

gameofrolls.com

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CRUISING FOR A BRUISING

When you hear the words "grappler" and "escape" together, you think of some slick move to escape a submission. But when you hear "Grappler's Escape", you'd better think about sandals, mai tais, and submissions! Grapplers Escape is the jiu-jitsu themed dream vacation set aboard a Carnival Cruise ship. The next Grappler's Escape sets sail from Galveston, Texas, aboard the Carnival Breeze from April 30 through May 7th this year and will be visiting exotic ports of call including Cozumel, Belize, and Roatan. But where the ship's going isn't the main attraction, it's what's going on below deck. This next sailing will feature instruction and training with three of the world's best black belts: Absolute Champion Marcus "Buchecha" Almeida, Checkmat Boss Leo Vieira, and heart and arm breaker – Mackenzie Dern! That's an amazing line up. Imagine training, learning, and even lounging out by the pool with these three? Where do you sign up you're wondering? At their website, go check it out.

grapplersescape.com

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WEIGHING IN Publishers Letter

ROLLING WITH THE TIMES

THIS FEBRUARY WILL MARK THE 22ND ANNIVERSARY OF MY FIRST VENTURE INTO THE WORLD OF MAGAZINE PUBLISHING. SINCE THEN, I ESTIMATE THAT I'VE OVERSEEN THE PUBLICATION OF OVER 500 SEPARATE ISSUES. My love of magazines dates back to my days of going to work with my dad during the summer. He used to deliver cookies to grocery stores. I would help him mark the cookies and stock the shelves. When my work was done and he'd have something he needed to finish up, I would find the magazine aisle and get lost digging through issues of *BMX Action*, *Body Boarding*, *Motor Trend*, *Black Belt*, and any other publication that drew my attention. When I decided to start my first magazine, the passion for the medium was very strong. I still have that same passion and appreciation for feel of the cover, the weight of an issue, the feel of each page between my fingers, how a large spread can be opened to 16 inches across to get the full effect and quality content printed on each page. Those virtues still stand today; however, the evolution of the world has left magazines as a ontent delivery device in the past. Publishers, like myself, have struggled with adjusting our business model to the modern world while holding on to the notion that nothing beats print. Considering print is what puts food on my table, this is a pretty firmly held belief. I've looked at my own reading habits, how I consume content that I'm interested in, the fact that more and more of our print subscribers are taking advantage of our digital edition, and over time, I've realized that maybe the printed page isn't the best way to enjoy the high-quality content people want.

With this new belief and after months of discussion here at the office, we've come to the decision to venture into a new stage of the magazine's evolution. Beginning February 7th, we will be launching a new app called Jiu-Jitsu Mag 360™. It will be available on both Apple iOS and Android devices as well as online, nobody will be left behind What will set this new app apart from our current digital offering, as well as other magazine apps you've seen, will be it's truly multimedia reader experience. There will be no need to pinch and zoom to read content; it will be built specifically for the digital experience. Videos of events, techniques, interviews, and more will be built right into the layout. Audio clips of the world's top jiu-jitsu athletes will be embedded throughout each issue. Rotatable 360° views of products, or even technique demonstrations, will be available. This is just the tip of the iceberg on what we'll be able to do in Jiu-Jitsu Mag 360. In order to be able to dedicate the resources needed to achieve the goals we're setting for this new app, we will be returning the printed version of Jiu-Jitsu Magazine back to its original bi-monthly printing schedule. Those in between months will be reserved for the editions of Jiu-Jitsu Mag 360. We'll still be producing 12 issues a year, once a month, but now six issues will be in print while six issues will be the new 360 version. For those of you thinking that this is not what you paid for when you subscribed, I'm asking you to give it at least two issues of 360. If you don't feel that you're getting even more than you paid for, we will gladly refund you for your subscription. All of us are very excited about all the new ways we'll be able to help readers get the most out of their jiu-jitsu with this new app. You are going to love it!

HERE'S A QUICK FAQ ON THE CHANGE:

Q: I have one year left in my subscription; will I get all twelve issues remaining?
A: Absolutely! Six of those issues will be printed- you'll receive those in the mail the first week of every odd numbered month. On even numbered months like February, you'll receive access to the paid version of Jiu-Jitsu Mag 360.

Q: Will there still be access to the digital editions of the printed versions of the magazine going forward?
A: Yes, through the new Jiu-Jitsu Mag 360 app you'll be able to access the digital edition of the printed magazine.

Q: What if I only want the print issues?
A: No problem, let us know and we'll adjust your subscription to make sure that you get all of the print issues you paid for.

Q: Will I still be able to pick up on the newsstand?
A: Yes, the print edition of *Jiu-Jitsu Magazine* will continue to be distributed on thousands of newsstands around the country and around the world. This includes stores like Wal-Mart, Walgreens, Target, Safeway, Kroger, Barnes & Noble, and many more.

Q: If I want to purchase individual issues of Jiu-Jitsu Mag 360, can I and how much will they cost?
A: Every issue on the new app will be available for either standalone digital subscriptions or individual purchase. The price per copy but will be less than $5 and available through the iTunes Store and Google Play. Along with the paid version that all subscribers will receive, there will be a free version that anyone can download or view. It will have a limited amount of content, but will give users a feel for the magazine along with some solid, usable content that they can use immediately to improve their jiu-jitsu.

Q: I'm an international subscriber and pay for additional postage, what happens there?
A: We will automatically extend your subscription on a prorated basis for the additional postage you paid on those 360 edition months. Or, if you'd like a refund of that postage, just let us know.

Once again, all of us here are extremely excited about the new opportunities we'll have to continue to provide you with the absolute best jiu-jitsu content found anywhere. Whether in print or in pixels, our mission has never wavered. We're dedicated to helping you improve and get the most out of your jiu-jitsu.

Thank you for reading and keep rolling!

MIKE VELEZ
Publisher/Editor-in-Chief
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PROMOTIONS

FROM THE BEGINNING AND BEYOND

School: Heroes Martial Arts
Location: San Jose, CA

WORDS FROM ALAN "GUMBY" MARQUEZ, PROFESSOR AT HEROES MARTIAL ARTS.

"I still literally agonize before every belt promotion...a lot of thought on my part, a lot of blood sweat and tears on behalf of the promoted is represented. Still, this was a special one tonight. Bobby Vasquez is my first white to black belt promotion. Bobby was with me before Heroes, before we were rated as one of the five most beautiful academies in the world and before we achieved any level of notoriety. Back in the airport jiu-jitsu days when the room was over 100 degrees in the summer and in the winter the mats were so cold we had to have a space heater to warm up our extremities, he was by my side when I opened up Heroes and was the enforcer for years. I've seen him grow up and slim down (from his first match at about 225 to now weighing about the same as myself (Middleweight class). He was the academy enforcer for years (even if he didn't know it). Heck, as a testament to his abilities, there was that time when travel is all that we did and he would actually wind up rolling with more legendary black belts than I did. If I ever needed anything, he was the first person I would call. Yeah, I agonize over every belt promotion, but this one felt completely right. Congratulations Bobby Vasquez! Best thing I could do to mark this occasion, as my master Ralph Gracie did years ago, was give you my own belt. If you felt today was one of the best days of your life, the feeling was absolutely mutual."

FROM VHS TO ACADEMY OWNER

School: The Stillness Gym
Location: Beaufort, SC

After starting to learn jiu-jitsu originally from VHS and DVDs over a decade ago, Cesar Clavijo went on to open his own academy. He was recently promoted to the rank of brown belt under Professor Roy Dean. Keep the journey going!

NEW BROWN

School: Gracie Barra
Location: Chino, CA

Congrats to our own Patrick Flores on earning his brown belt from Rafael Oliveira.

BUCKHEAD BLACK AND BLUE

School: Buckhead Jiu-Jitsu
Location: Atlanta, GA

Bravo to Steven Mann for receiving his blue belt this past month! Big congrats to Derek Kaivani on earning his 1st degree on his black belt. Both train and were promoted under Sam Joseph of Buckhead Jiu-Jitsu. Awesome work guys!

KEEPING THE SOUL IN ARIZONA

School: Soul Fighters
Location: Phoenix, AZ

Great job to Tim Welch who just received his brown belt from Augusto Tanquinho Mendes and John Crouch. Keep it up!

BE THE CHANGE IN YOUR LIFE!

School: Vargas BJJ
Location: Southlake, TX

After training for the past two and a half years, Anna McMurrey was promoted to blue belt. She's competed in over a dozen tournaments and is looking forward to competing as a blue belt! She says that jiu-jitsu has definitely changed her life. Keep it up Anna!

BAD TO THE BLUE

School: Chicago Fight Team
Location: Chicago, IL

Congratulations to Nic Flood, Mark Sainci, and Darrius Flowers (shown kneeling) for their promotions to blue belt under Rudy Jimenez!

STRONG ALLIANCES

School: WNYMMA/Alliance Buffalo
Location: Buffalo, NY

Congratulations to Doug Lanphere on earning his brown belt promotion from Fabio Gurgel. His instructors Mike Dauenhauer and Matt Godden are also shown in the photo.

EAT YOUR DAILY VITAMINS

WORDS: **JASMINE STEIN**

Since we were kids, we've been told to take our daily vitamins. I remember chewing on those Flintstones vitamins that left a terrible after taste in my mouth when I was a little girl. Vitamins are organic compounds that are essential for the human body to function properly. Vitamin deficiency can lead to disease and serious health problems, particularly where there is inadequate vitamin intake over a long period of time. Couple that with the stresses of jiu-jitsu training and it's easy for us to run the risk of a deficiency. But rather than go back to Fred and Barney for our vitamins, it's best if we can get everything we need from our daily diets. There are currently thirteen separate vitamins recognized by health experts. In this article, I'm going to go over each individually, let you know what it does, and what you can add to your diet to make sure you're getting enough. I've also included the dietary reference intakes (DRI) recommended by the Institute of Medicine.

TWO TYPES OF VITAMINS

Vitamins are divided into two categories, fat-soluble or water-soluble. Fat-soluble vitamins can be stored in the liver and the fatty tissues of the human body, which means that you can build up a reserve of fat-soluble vitamins to last several days, weeks, or even months. Water-soluble vitamins cannot be stored in the body and will be expelled in the urine, which means that you need to ensure a regular intake of water-soluble vitamins.

VITAMIN A

Vitamin A is a fat-soluble vitamin with powerful antioxidant properties. Sometimes known as retinol, retinal, or retinoic acid, vitamin A is essential for healthy eyesight, strong bones, and a resilient immune system. It also helps to protect against cataracts, lung cancer, and prostate cancer, while producing protective cells to coat the digestive tract and lungs. Deficiency is rare but can lead to dry skin, dry hair, itching, problems with vision and sometimes even blindness. The best food sources of vitamin A include liver, beef, oily fish, eggs, cheese, dairy products, carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, and leafy green vegetables. Most people get enough vitamin A from their regular diet with no need for supplementation. Excessive intake has been linked to birth defects, so pregnant women are often advised to limit their intake of liver and other foods high in vitamin A. **DRI: 900mcg (men), 700mcg (women)**

Vitamin B1

Is also known as thiamin or thiamine, is a water-soluble vitamin that works in conjunction with other B vitamins to help convert carbohydrates into energy which is pretty important for grapplers. Vitamin B1 is needed for healthy muscles, skin cells, and hair. It is also needed to ensure the proper functioning of the brain and nervous system. Deficiency can lead to fatigue, muscle weakness, nerve damage, and psychosis. Deficiency is more common in people suffering from alcoholism, as alcohol inhibits the absorption of thiamin. The best food sources of vitamin B1 include pork, eggs, soy products, dried fruit, nuts, seeds, and watermelon. **DRI: 1.2mg (men), 1.1mg (women)**

Vitamin B2

Also known as riboflavin, B2 is a water-soluble vitamin that promotes healthy red blood cell production. It is also essential for healthy brain cells, skin cells, and hair. Deficiency can lead to anaemia, skin problems, sore throat, sensitivity to light, and cracks around the mouth and lips. The best food sources of vitamin B2 include liver, eggs, cheese, dairy products, rice, whole grains and mushrooms. **DRI: 1.3mg (men), 1.1mg (women)**

Vitamin B3

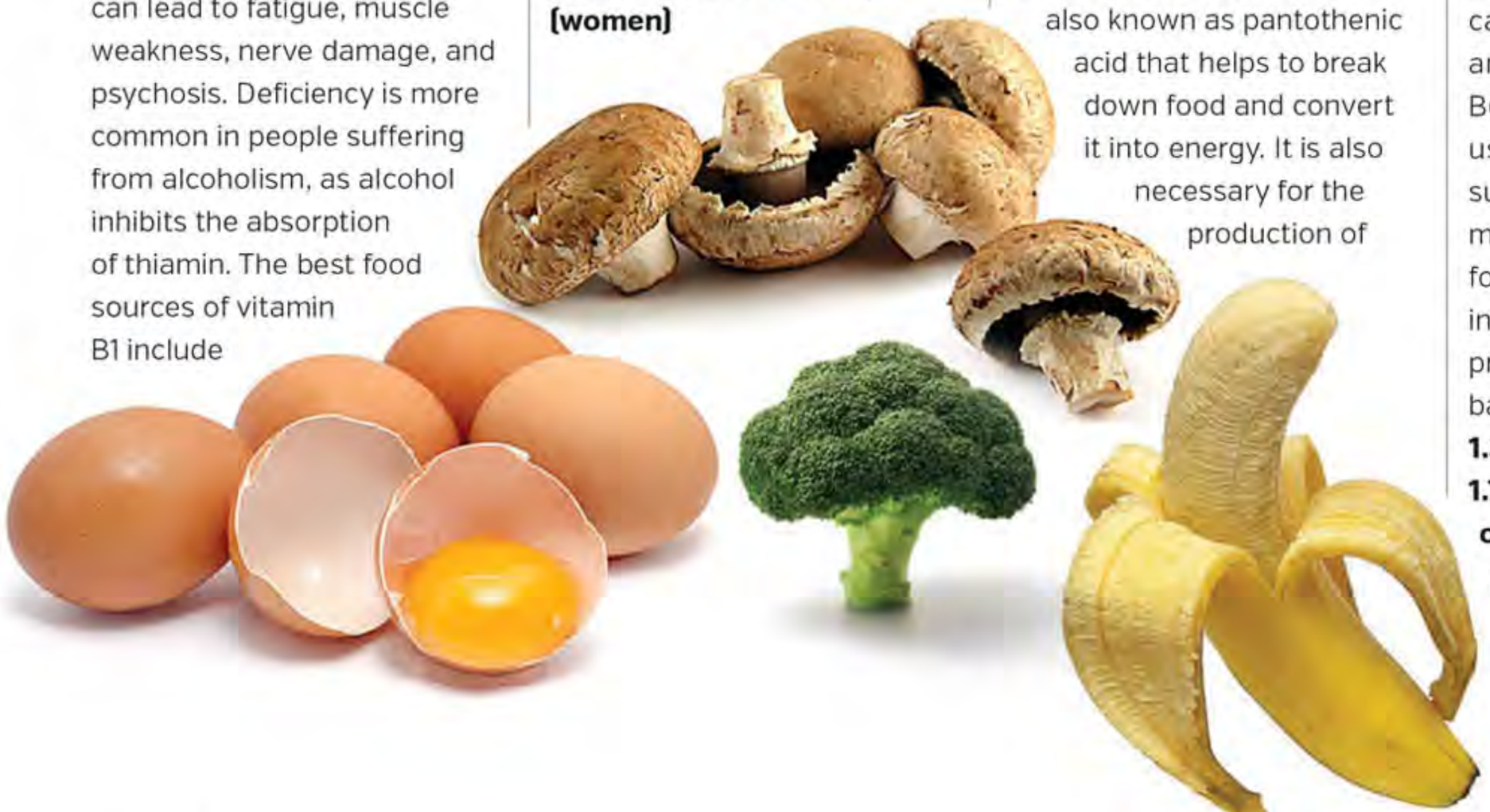
Also known as niacin, B3 is a water-soluble vitamin essential for a healthy nervous system and digestive system. It also helps to balance the levels of good and bad cholesterol. Deficiency can lead to digestive problems, skin complaints, and a reduction in cognitive abilities. The best food sources for vitamin B3 include beef, pork, chicken, fish, nuts, mushrooms, potatoes and whole grains. **DRI: 16mg (men), 14mg (women)**

Vitamin B5

Is a water-soluble vitamin also known as pantothenic acid that helps to break down food and convert it into energy. It is also necessary for the production of certain hormones, neurotransmitters, and healthy blood cells. Deficiency is rare but can lead to neurological problems. The best food sources of vitamin B5 include liver, beef, chicken, broccoli, tomatoes, mushrooms and whole grains. **DRI: 5mg**

Vitamin B6

Vitamin B6, also known as pyridoxine, pyridoxal, or pyridoxamine, is a water-soluble vitamin that helps to regulate mood, sleep, appetite, and metabolism. It is also essential for a healthy immune system and optimum mental function. Deficiency is relatively common and can cause headaches, anaemia, and skin problems. Vitamin B6 supplements are often used as a remedy for women suffering from PMS (pre-menstrual syndrome). The best food sources of vitamin B6 include pork, chicken, cod, soy products, eggs, rice, oatmeal, bananas and potatoes. **DRI: 1.3mg (31-50 years old), 1.7mg (men 51 years and over), 1.5mg (women 51 years and over)**



Vitamin B9

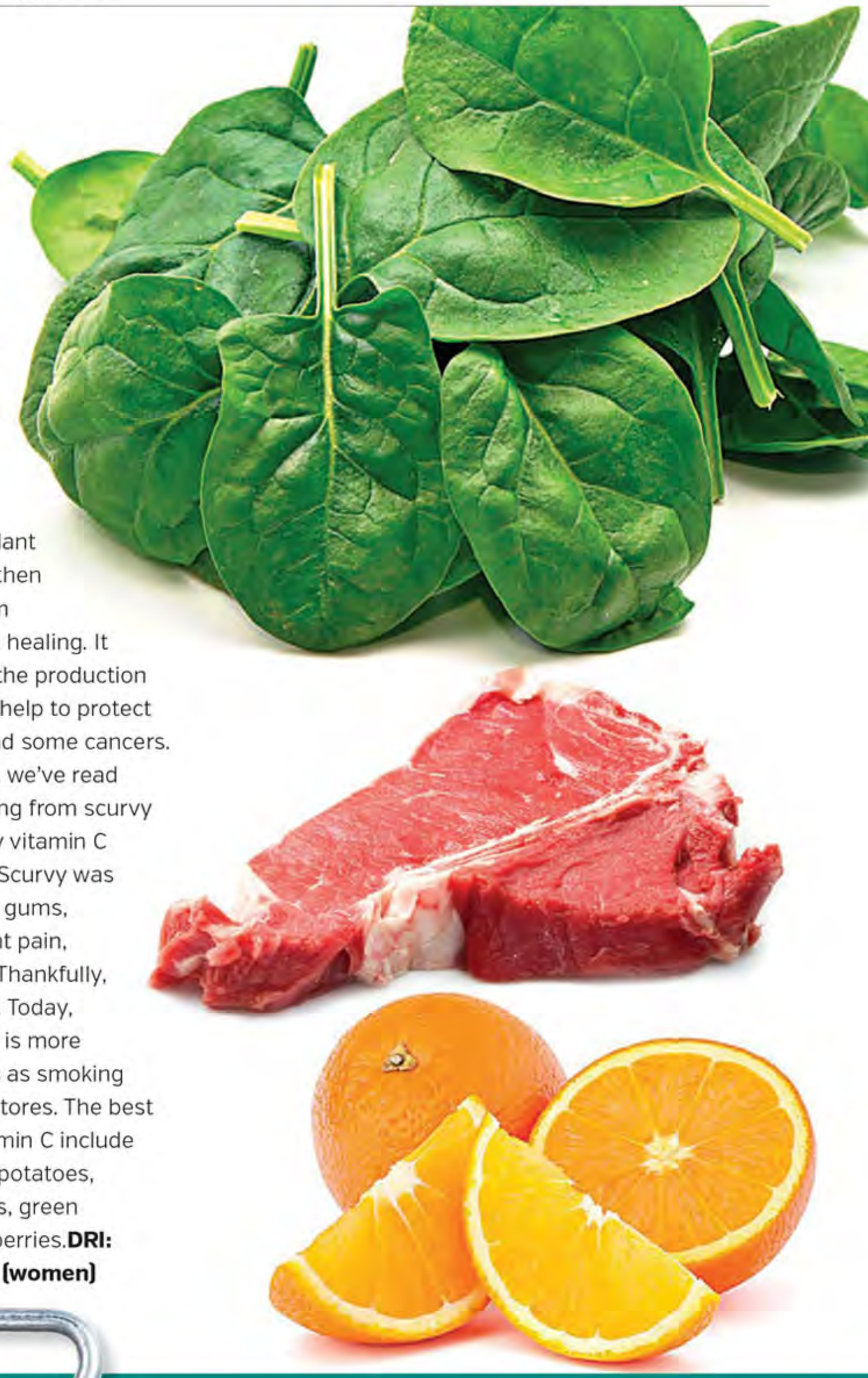
More commonly known as folic acid or folate, B9 is a water-soluble vitamin essential for the production of healthy red blood cells. Folic acid is also an important nutrient for helping to prevent birth defects. While most people can obtain adequate amounts of folic acid from their diet, pregnant women and women who are trying to conceive are often advised to take folic acid supplements. The best food sources of folic acid include liver, broccoli, spinach, bananas, brown rice, fortified cereals and yeast extract. **DRI: 400mcg**

Vitamin B12

Vitamin B12, also known as cobalamin, is a water-soluble vitamin that helps to protect nerve cells and reduce the risk of heart disease. It is also needed for the production of red blood cells. Older people are prone to vitamin B12 deficiency as their bodies can be less effici t at absorbing cobalamin from food. Vegans may also find it difficul to obtain enough of the vitamin from their food as animal products are the richest source of vitamin B12. Deficiency can lead to anaemia, memory loss, and dementia. The best food sources of vitamin B12 include liver, red meat, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy products. **DRI: 2.4mcg**

Vitamin C

Is probably the first vitamin we hear about as kids. It's also known as ascorbic acid and is a water-soluble vitamin and antioxidant that helps to strengthen your immune system and promote wound healing. It is also essential for the production of collagen and can help to protect against cataracts and some cancers. In the history books, we've read about sailors suffering from scurvy from not getting any vitamin C after three months. Scurvy was pretty bad: bleeding gums, teeth falling out, joint pain, bruising, and more. Thankfully, scruvy is pretty rare. Today, vitamin C deficiency is more common in smokers as smoking depletes vitamin C stores. The best food sources of vitamin C include oranges, tomatoes, potatoes, broccoli, red peppers, green peppers, and strawberries.**DRI: 90mg (men), 75mg (women)**



VITAMIN D

Is a fat-soluble vitamin needed for building and maintaining healthy bones. It also helps to regulate the amount of minerals, such as calcium and phosphate, in the body. Deficiency can lead to bone problems and deformities. Vitamin D is produced by the body when the skin comes into contact with sunlight. It can also be obtained by eating eggs, fortified cereal, and oily fish such as sardines, mackerel and salmon. However, without adequate exposure to sunlight, supplements may be necessary to prevent deficiency. **DRI: 600IU**

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Vitamin E

Vitamin E is a fat-soluble vitamin and antioxidant that can help to protect against prostate cancer and Alzheimer's disease. It is also important for ensuring healthy cell membranes and blood cells. Deficiency can lead to problems with the immune system and a reduced resistance to disease. To make sure you're on the mats all year round, it's important to get enough vitamin E in your diet. The best food sources of vitamin E include avocado, nuts, seeds, leafy green vegetables, olive oil, and corn oil. **DRI: 15mg**

Vitamin H

Vitamin H? Who knew there was a vitamin H? Well, it's more commonly known as biotin and is a water-soluble vitamin that helps to convert carbohydrates into energy. It also helps to break down fatty acids and promote healthy bones and hair. We all want nice hair, but healthy bones are vital for grapplers. The best food sources of biotin include egg yolk, fish, whole grains and soy products. Most people obtain adequate amounts of biotin from their diet. **DRI: 30mcg**

Vitamin K

Vitamin K is essential for blood clotting and wound healing. Only a small amount of vitamin K is needed, and most people can obtain this from their diet. Unless specific health conditions require an increased intake of vitamin K, supplementation is not needed. The best food sources of vitamin K include broccoli, spinach, green leafy vegetables, eggs, dairy products, and fortified cereals. If you're taking blood thinners, talk to your doctor about vitamin K as it should not be cut out completely but excess amounts should be avoided. **DRI: 120mcg (men), 90mcg (women)**

You might not be a fan of liver, but it's pretty packed with vitamins. So are eggs and leafy green vegetables- these are among the richest food sources for essential nutrients since they offer a range of vitamins, minerals, and trace elements needed for optimum health. The most important factor in ensuring a healthy diet is to eat a wide variety of foods, particularly fruit, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, eggs, dairy products, fish poultry and lean meats. Making sure you cover the vitamin alphabet in your diet will help keep you on the mats and training every day.

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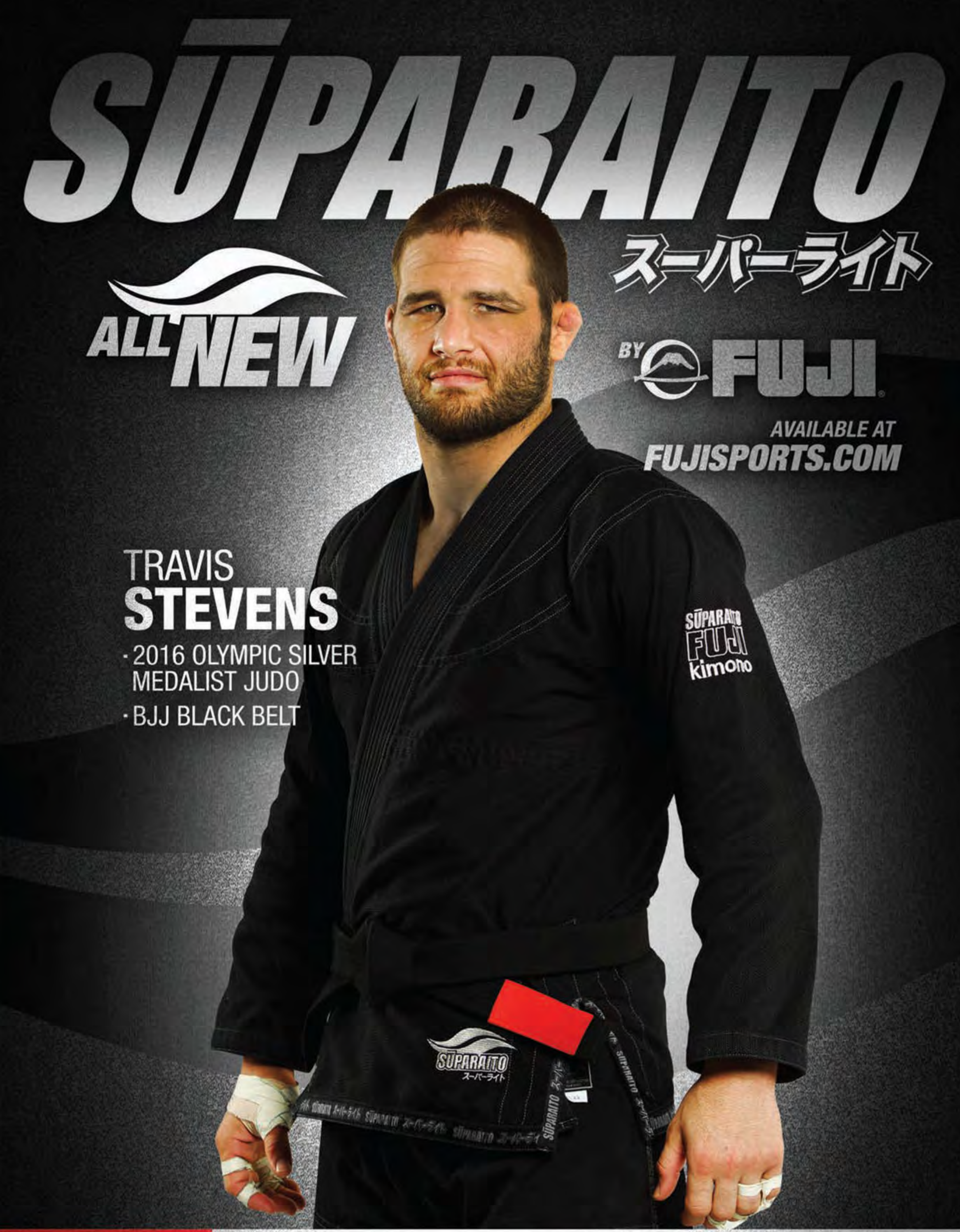

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ROLL LONGER WITH CITRULLINE

WORDS: **ZACH BOHANNAN**

ABOUT

The Author

Zach Bohannan is a writer and research scientist based out of Houston, TX. He trains at Revolution Dojo Houston and hopes to one day be as good as his teammates.

What Is Citrulline?

CITRULLINE IS A DIETARY AMINO ACID DERIVED FROM WATERMELON EXTRACT THAT IS ASSOCIATED WITH SEVERAL HEALTH BENEFITS BUT IS MOST USEFUL FOR GRAPPLERS FOR ITS POTENTIAL ABILITY TO ENHANCE RECOVERY AND REDUCE FATIGUE. LIKE MOST SUPPLEMENTS, CITRULLINE SUPPLEMENTATION ISN'T GENERALLY ESSENTIAL FOR HEALTH, BUT THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT IT MAY BE GOOD FOR ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE. Citrulline is an amino acid, but it isn't one of the typical amino acids used to build proteins. Instead, it's part of the metabolic process your body uses when it burns protein for fuel.

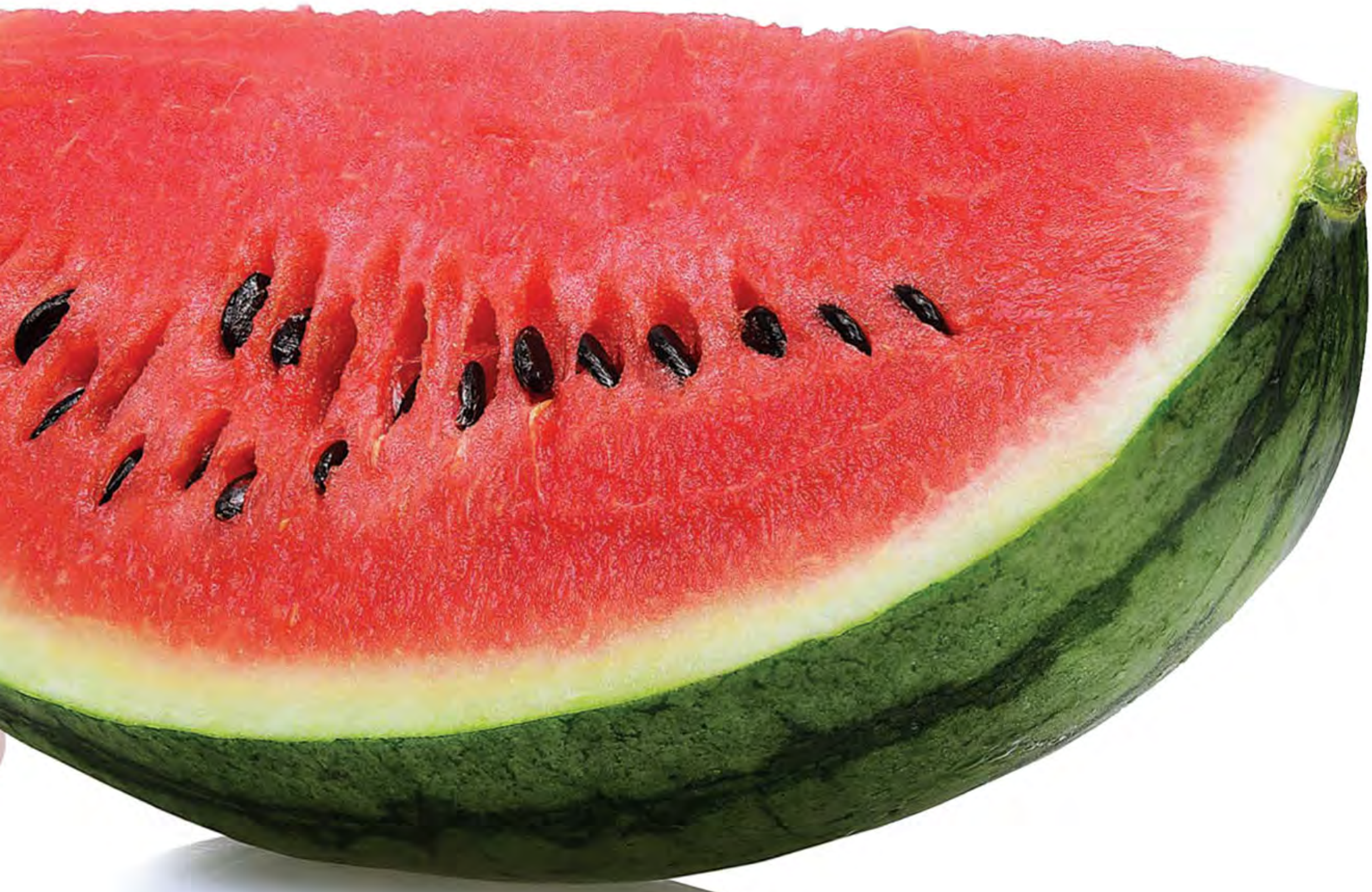
HOW DOES IT WORK?

Most people think of carbs and fats as the primary fuel sources for the body, and they generally are, but protein is also used, and this is especially relevant for long-duration endurance exercise (when your body runs out of easily available carbs) or for people who are on low-carb or keto diets. Basically, the fewer carb and fat calories you eat, the more likely your body will use protein as fuel, whether it comes from your muscles or the eight chicken breasts you're forcing down every day in order to make weight.

Most athletes know that extreme diets can lead to loss of muscle mass, and that's generally a direct result of your body burning muscle protein for energy. Regardless of what your diet or exercise routine is, this process always occurs at a low level. It's just part of life, and it's not necessarily a bad thing, especially if you need the energy to push through long training sessions or are trying to train hard during a weight cut.

There's a reason that protein is usually the "last resort" fuel used by your body: it results in some pretty nasty waste products like ammonia. You know, that stuff you use to disinfect the toilets in the gym bathroom. Obviously, any ingredient in toilet bowl cleaner is not a great thing to have in your body for a long time, so your body needs a really effective way to get rid of it.

That's where citrulline comes in. It's an important part of a big, complicated system that turns ammonia into urine. It is also related to nitric oxide production, which is one of the signaling molecules that encourages blood flow and many of the metabolic processes associated with athletic activity (as opposed to sleeping or watching YouTube videos), but its most important effect for grapplers is helping facilitate metabolism and reduce the toxic waste products generated by exercise, especially when dieting or training for a long time.



WHY IS IT BENEFICIAL FOR GRAPPLERS?

As you might expect from a compound involved in processing metabolic waste, citrulline can be good for recovery and fatigue. The actual research into the effects of citrulline is mixed, but that is true of pretty much every supplement ever. Most evidence indicates that citrulline is best as a supplement for people who are really pushing their fatigue levels, whether they're training on a cut or are newer competitors who aren't used to a lot of training. So if you're feeling really wrecked after class or can't fully recover before your training session, citrulline may help with that. It probably won't help increase your explosiveness or strength, but it may help you train for longer or more frequently. It may also help minimize the extra rest you need during a weight cut.

BUT IS IT LEGAL?

As far as banned substances go, I don't think citrulline would ever be on any list since it's a natural component of a bunch of different fruits and nuts in various quantities and readily converts into arginine which is an essential dietary amino acid. In any case, it's not banned by WADA [and, by extension USADA]. It's not legal for NCAA programs to provide it to athletes, but that's true of pretty much anything beyond Gatorade, and it should be fine if the athletes buy it themselves.

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HOW TO TAKE IT

Citrulline is a very common component in many pre-workout supplements. If you take any kind of pre-workout supplement, it may be worth checking if it already contains citrulline or watermelon extract. Unfortunately, a lot of pre-workouts don't mention how much citrulline they actually contain. Also, watermelon extract contains other ingredients besides citrulline [see below], which makes this problem more complicated.

Taken alone, you generally need quite a bit of citrulline to see a performance effect, at least according to research studies. Five grams [5000 mg] is probably the minimum amount you should take for sports performance, and it's best when taken just before exercising. In theory, you could probably take it after training and still see some recovery benefit, but there isn't much research to support that approach, so it's probably best to use it as a pre-workout supplement.

Supplement Facts
Serving Size: 1 Level Scoop (2000mg) Servings Per Container: 100
Amount Per Serving
% Daily Value
L-Citrulline-DL-Malate
2000mg
*
*Daily Value not established.
Recommended Use: As a dietary supplement consume 1-3 servings before and during exercise.
Note: This product produced in a facility that may also process ingredients containing milk, egg, soybeans, fish, shellfish, treenuts, and peanuts.
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R3-2013

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Taken alone, citrulline is pretty harmless. You can take quite a bit of it and still be fine because it's relatively easy for your body to absorb. There's not really any evidence that more is better though, so it's probably best to limit your dose to 5-7 grams.

The same can't be said for watermelon extract. Sometimes people sell watermelon extract as a citrulline supplement, but it contains other ingredients as well, and many of them are not as easy to digest as citrulline is. Meaning that if you get your citrulline in watermelon extract form, you should be careful how much you take at one time unless you want to sprint to the bathroom in the middle of a roll.

Also, it's worth noting that because of its effects on nitric oxide, some people also use it as a natural version of Viagra. It's not necessarily very good at that sort of thing, but it may be worth testing out before you pull on your best spats and try to triangle someone.

- Beware, watermelon extract is not the same as citrulline.

CONCLUSION

If you're feeling really beat up by a hard training cycle or a big weight cut, citrulline might be a good supplement to try. You might even be trying it already in the form of a pre-workout, and it's definitely worth checking the label. Taking it in the form of citrulline or citrulline malate is probably the best and safest approach, but you can also take it in the form of watermelon extract if you're a bit more careful with the dosage.

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LEARNING HOW TO ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS IN JIU-JITSU

WORDS: **RICARDO CASTANEDA**

WHEN BEGINNING THE JOURNEY INTO THE WONDERFUL ART OF JIU-JITSU, ONE HAS ABSOLUTELY NO CLUE AS TO WHAT HE OR SHE IS DOING. IT IS A NEW WORLD FILLED WITH MOVEMENTS AND POSITIONS COMPLETELY UNFAMILIAR TO WHAT MOST PEOPLE CAN CONCEIVE OF AS HUMAN MOVEMENT. The tendency for beginners is to have a million and one questions. For the novice, following along with instruction is challenging and seems to reveal more questions than answers. It is great to have questions. Having questions is an indication that you are actively engaged in the lesson and open-minded to the fact that you might need extra help. Questions are valuable, but having too many questions, or even the wrong types of questions, can be detrimental to the instruction. Asking the right questions is a great skill to have in order to improve your learning curve.

LIMIT YOUR QUESTIONS

You are going to have a lot of questions but having too many questions can create cognitive overload. The brain can only handle so much information. The more steps a technique involves, the more likely your brain will omit parts of the procedure in order to store what it can to memory. This is the same for asking too many questions. If you are asking too many questions, your brain will not be able to process and internalize all of the answers given effectively. You will have to trim the questions down in order to keep things short and simple for effici t memory storage.

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MAKE SURE YOUR QUESTIONS ARE RELEVANT

Irrelevant questions are a distraction. During a demonstration, if a question is asked that is completely off topic, the attention and focus of the whole room can be derailed. If the question is so off the mark that the students' attention shifts ff topic, confusion will arise and the instructor will likely be thrown off as well. Make sure your questions pertain to the immediate topic. If an armbar is being taught, it is great to ask questions about how the fulcrum works or where the most effective place is for your grips. These are great questions because they pertain to the topic being covered.

Another example of a relevant question is "How does one alleviate the pressure to defend an armbar?" This question also reflects the topic and though slightly off track (e.g. a defense and not an attack), it can still be answered without confusion. An unrelated follow up question, however, is "How does this apply to a leglock?" Though the principle of the fulcrum still applies, armbars and leglocks are vastly different in how they are set up and when they are used. They also utilize different halves of the body. If the position has to be changed in order to answer the question, it is probably unrelated and should be saved for a more appropriate time. Asking a single irrelevant question can be more confusing than asking too many relevant questions.

FINDING THE MOST ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

If you find yourself with multiple questions, first you will need to decide which are irrelevant. Asking irrelevant questions is more confusing than asking too many questions. In addition to the cognitive overload, you will also be a distraction if your questions have nothing to do with the technique being taught. It is good to have questions, even if they are irrelevant but keep in mind that there is a time and place for all questions.

After you find the most relevant questions, you will have to decide which are the most important. The most important questions are going to be the ones that are most necessary to execute a technique effectively. If a choke is being taught, for example, it is great to ask questions such as "What happens if my grip is too high on the collar?" and "Is it alright to grab the fabric on the shoulder if I cannot get my grip on the opposite collar?" These are both great questions because they pertain to the instruction and are easy to follow. They are also critical to the effectiveness of the instruction and others in the room may have the same question but might be afraid to speak up.

CONCEPTUAL VERSUS PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

Conceptual questions are generally better than procedural questions. Concepts can usually be explained in a couple of short sentences and are applicable across many domains. Procedural questions, on the other hand, are very specific and require thorough, step-by-step information that can be hard to retain. An example of this is asking how an armbar works compared to asking how to set up an armbar from the side control position. The armbar from side control is specific to the position and also requires a series of instructions aimed at getting from the position itself to the submission. If, however, you know how an arm breaks with the use of a fulcrum, the instruction will apply for all armbars across various positions.

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LADIES: S, M, L

MENS: XS, S, M, L, XL,

2XL, 3XL, 4XL

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Miscellaneous Questions

As a beginner, you are going to have questions that extend beyond the scope of technical or procedural instruction. At times, you may have questions regarding diet, how often to train, why everything hurts, and what activities you can do to supplement your jiu-jitsu training. These are all great questions. Any answers you can ascertain that improve your development in jiu-jitsu are invaluable.

When you are a beginner, you are going to be surrounded by people who have much more experience than you. Experience is a resource that you probably have not yet developed so take advantage of the experience of others by asking questions. Most of your training partners and instructors will be happy to help because they were once in your shoes. Never be afraid to ask questions and always absorb the wisdom of the higher ranks. Be sure to pay it forward too and always help students who ask you for help. We are all here for each other.

ONE QUESTION NOT TO ASK

One question you will likely have when starting out is when your next promotion will be. The impatience to develop and move up the ranks is an attribute that creates a lot of negative emotions and can hurt you more than it will help. Patience on the mats is virtuous and you need to trust that your professors and coaches know what is best for you and your progress.

Assume that they know when you will be ready for that next step in your journey. If you cannot trust their judgment, then you are likely at the wrong academy and you should discuss this with them so that the right changes can be implemented. If, however, you have developed profound trust and rapport with your instructors, then take things day by day. If you feel stagnant, you can always ask what you can do to get better or what you can do to reach the next level, but never ask when you will be receiving your next promotion. A great mentor will always give you an honest answer and should have an open door policy with his or her students.

TIPS FROM THE TEAM

The World's Best Share Their Best Advice

IT'S NOT TOO OFTEN THAT YOU GET A DOZEN OF THE WORLD'S ABSOLUTE BEST JIU-JITSU ATHLETES ON THE PLANET. WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY RECENTLY WITH A MEETING OF THE STORM KIMONOS TIER ONE TEAM. They were on hand to pick up some of the new apparel and gear from Storm. With all of these athletes in one room, we had to pick their brains and find out what advice they'd share with readers and what advice that's been handed to them has had the greatest impact on their jiu-jitsu and their lives. Anyone can use these tips and nuggets of wisdom to help them on their journey and to help make 2017 your best year yet both in your jiu-jitsu and in life.

VICTOR ESTIMA

Age: 32
Training Since: 2000
Black Belt Since: 2006
Affili tion: Gracie Barra

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: One of the biggest lessons I can give a beginner is to stay consistent. Keep showing up to class and eventually it will all start to make sense. I would also make sure that you pay close attention to your body. Core and stability are not overrated and will keep your lower back healthy. Never compromise your body in order to avoid submission or a point. At training there are no medals or titles, you will need to come back to train the next day. Finally, the biggest lesson for me is to not let your ego get in the way of your progress.

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: Jiu-jitsu is a very smart and complex martial art, never stop studying. Make sure that your jiu-jitsu is always evolving so you don't fall behind. If you are a black belt or close to earning it, don't fall into the trap of the comfort zone. Try a new game and aim to be a complete practitioner.

The best advice I've ever received: To always be a better version of myself on and off the mats.

Resolution for 2017: To win a World Championship and be better every day.

RENATO LARANJA

Age: 23
Training Since: 1985
Black Belt Since: 1985
Affili tion: Renato Laranja – Fruits and Vegetables

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: "A black belt is only a white belt who..."? "A white belt is just a white belt who needs to give up"

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: Tell your sensei to host a Renato Laranja seminar.

The best advice I've ever received: Don't fall for a banana in the tailpipe.

Resolution for 2017: Abolish child Support in the contiguous United States as well as also South America.

EDWIN **NAJMI**

Age: 23
Training Since: 2009
Black Belt Since: 2015
Affiliation: Gracie Barra

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: Pick a move and master it and then move on to the next one. Sometimes beginners try to learn too many techniques when they start and that's too much information for them. It's better to focus on individual techniques or positions one at a time. Also, have fun!

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: Continuing from the advice to beginners. Evolve your game, don't keep insisting on doing the same game you've been doing since blue belt. This happens often in jiu-jitsu, people only play the same game and stall their improvement. Always try to add new techniques to your game every month or so.

The best advice I've ever received: Everyone always says this, but it's true. Work hard, believe in yourself- anything is possible.

Resolution for 2017: Solidify my spot as one of the best in the sport today.

GABRIEL **ARGES**

Age: 23
Training Since: 2009
Black Belt Since: 2015
Affiliation: Gracie Barra

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: Be patient, especially when you're just starting out. Remember that the journey will only get better and more enjoyable as you continue. You'll understand more, maybe not between one class to the next but over the weeks and then months, little things will begin to click.

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: Listen to your body when it tells you to rest. Injuries will keep you away from the mat, so the best thing to do is to rest when you need it. Otherwise you'll get injured and be out even longer.

The best advice I've ever received: Always be humble and always try to help people around you on the mats and in life.

Resolution for 2017: Maintain my position as a top ranked black belt on UAEJJF and win the World Championship at UAEJJF and IBJJF again!

OTAVIO SOUSA

Age: 30
Training Since: 1999
Black Belt Since: 2007
Affili tion: Gracie Barra

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: Any technique your professor shows to you, make sure to repeat as many times as you can, repetition is everything in jiu-jitsu. Try to apply it every time you get to spar, don't worry if it is going to work or not, but make sure you try it and insist in believing that you going to get it. That will make you memorize the move and you can add that to your arsenal as another "weapon".

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: When you are going to the academy to train, make sure to check your ego at the door. Don't get upset when someone submits you or manages to do well against you and try to learn from the situation instead. Keep your mind open to learn, always helping the lower belts because by teaching you learn twice as much.

The best advice I've ever received: Before you talk, listen. Before you react, think. Before you criticize, wait. Before you pray, forgive. Before you quit, try.

Resolution for 2017: Win my fourth World Title as a black belt.

FELIPE PENA

Age: 25
Training Since: 2006
Black Belt Since: 2012
Affili tion: Gracie Barra

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: Find a good gym that will allow you to grow. Once you find the right gym, trust your instructors, and don't be rush to learn the basics.

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: Always be humble to know that you can learn from everyone. It does not matter the belt or accomplishments, there's something to learn everywhere.

The best advice I've ever received: Don't worry about what others are doing, concentrate on you and do your best, always!

Resolution for 2017: World Champion IBJJF, World Pro champion UAEJJ, ADCC champion!

LUCAS LEPRI

Age: 32
Training Since: 2000
Black Belt Since: 2006
Affil tion: Alliance

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: Enjoy the journey without worrying about the belt. Don't be in a rush to collect stripes. It feels good to get that promotion, but it feels even better when you know you've earned it. The promotion is the consequence of your dedication, ability to overcome, and discipline. Consistency is the key.

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: Make sure you train differently every session. Do not train the same way all the time. Do different timed rounds, specific positions, attacks, defenses. Always try new positions, be a complete fighter and the most important is to learn to train tired. When you train tired you'll use more technique than you do when you have more power. This is how you become more technical.

The best advice I've ever received: Without a doubt was when my first teacher told me how important it is to be a complete fighter.

Resolution for 2017: I have few, but one of them for sure is the ADCC title that I'm missing.

ROBERTO "CYBORG" ABREU

Age: 35
Training Since: 1998
Black Belt Since: 2004
Affiliation: Fight Sports

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: Focus on the journey not on the goal. The belt or championships will eventually come as soon as you give your best to your evolution and enjoy every aspect of your training.

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: Jiu-jitsu is hard on the body, so conditioning is great to keep the body strong to prevent injuries. There is only one thing worse than not training, it is training too much. Training is about quantity not quality. Train hard and smart.

The best advice I've ever received: "There is only one thing worse than not training, it is training too much." -Mário Sperry

Resolution for 2017: To be happy!

RUBENS "COBRINHA" CHARLES

Age: 37
Training Since: 2000
Black Belt Since: 2005
Affiliation: Alliance

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: Do not be afraid to tap. We don't step on the mat with our shoes because our shoes are dirty and we don't want to pollute the mats with them. So, it's exactly the same with our mind and our egos, make sure you leave your ego at the door when you come to train. With years of training and coaching, I have seen a lot of people quit jiu-jitsu because they bring their egos to the mat. Please do not be one of them and make sure to leave your ego at the door and don't forget to have fun when you train. At the end the day we never lose. Jiu-jitsu is a great skill that translates really well to our lives. For example: Sometimes we win the battle and sometimes we learn from it. In other words, we never lose in jiu-jitsu.

Best advice for someone who's been training a while: If you tap, you leave and will be able to roll another day, If you don't tap, you can get yourself in a serious injury and won't train for awhile. Make sure you drill your techniques as much as you can to have better control of your techniques. This way you don't get hurt and don't hurt others. I hear a lot people saying that they don't like to drill because it's boring. It can be boring if you don't make it a habit. However, if you develop the great habit of drilling the techniques, you will see more improvements in your game and also you will prevent a lot of injury. Don't forget that our goal is to train jiu-jitsu forever!

The aest advice I've ever received: I received this advice through hard work and perseverance. Eight years ago, I pursuing my dream of winning ADCC; it was the only title that was missing in my career. I prepared really well and I came short in the final. I had to wait for another two years to compete again. I waited for another two years which was a total of four years and once again I prepared myself really well and once again I came short on the final. So that is when the story begins. I had to wait for another two years which was six years total and again I didn't want to give up on my dream. I started training and preparing for the ADCC competition again when I started getting calls from a lot of people saying that I should not do it again because I was getting old, etc, and to be honest I doubted myself because I let people redirect my life, but only for a day. I went to sleep and I woke up on the next day earlier than usual to continue the training camp for the ADCC 2013 and guess what, I went there and I won my first ADDC title and I was the happiest person on earth because I didn't let people redirect my life. I was in control of my destiny.

Resolution for 2017: I will do what I can to take care of my body to be healthy and be able to compete as much as I can.

CLAUDIO **CALASANS**

Age: 33
Training Since: 1998
Black Belt Since: 2005
Affiliation: Atos

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: Train with discipline. The discipline is very important for a jiu-jitsu student because you must always break barriers to continue the evolution of your jiu-jitsu.

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: Keep training hard and take a look at all of your technique. Look at the details, in there you will discover more techniques.

The best advice I've ever received: If you are to reach the top, it depends only on you.

Resolution for 2017: I want win my super fight in ADCC in September.

ROMULO **BARRAL**

Age: 34
Training Since: 1998
Black Belt Since: 2005
Affiliation: Gracie Barra

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: When you're just starting out, don't get impressed by the fancy stuff. Stick with the basics until you're ready to progress.

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: Build a strong foundation first and your game, your system, everything else will come naturally when you have your own game and system in place.

The best advice I've ever received: Was to stick with jiu-jitsu and open my own school and to keep competing and forget about MMA. I never regretted hat decision, and I'm thankful for that advice.

Resolution for 2017: Three gold medals at black belt World Championship from my students.

RODRIGO **"COMPRIDO" MEDEIROS**

Age: 39
Training Since: 1993
Black Belt Since: 1999
Affiliation: Brasa

Best advice to someone just starting their journey: If jiu-jitsu seems too complex at first, just relax. Keep training, it will make more sense. The more you train the more you will understand and it will all make more sense as time passes. Eventually you will start to see a few moves ahead.

Best advice for someone who's been training awhile: Anytime you are in trouble and in a situation you have to defend yourself, keep telling yourself you are in trouble but resist just one more second and like the Energizer Bunny keep fighting one more second at a time. As you buy time, keep looking for the right escape and you will be surprised how often the other guy will feel the pressure to finish and end up making a mistake.

The best advice I've ever received: Was given to me by my friend and sponsor Luis Antonio at Capital Services. He told me, "Don't worry with what everybody else is doing, focus on being a better professional, athlete, person - keep looking ahead."

Resolution for 2017: Lose 10 pounds, haha.

What's on this mat is going to cause this athlete to lose his next match.

Fungus, bacteria, and viruses usually have long incubation periods. Rashes can actually take a few days to appear on your skin. So, what you contract today is going to take its toll later. If you can fight these microbes within the first few hours of contact the chances are you can stop them.

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THE TACTICS OF TARSIS

WORDS AND PHOTOS: **PATRICK FLORES**

Tarsis Humphreys is a veteran competitor who has certainly earned his position among the elite. He has won every major IBJJF event and has defeated some of the best names in jiu-jitsu at the most prestigious events. Humphreys is known for his well rounded game, not favoring any position over the other. Today he shows us a variety of techniques that include sweeps, passes, counters, and submissions. He has used his experience and time on the mats to modernize old school techniques and stay one step ahead of his opponents.

RAW DATA
Powered by BJJ Heros

Lineage:
Mitsuyo Maeda > Carlos Gracie > Helio Gracie > Rolls Gracie > Romero Cavalcanti > Fábio Gurgel > Tarsis Humphreys

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS:
- World Champion (2010)
- Pan American Champion (2006 brown weight + absolute)
- European Open Champion (2010)
- Brazilian National Champion (2006 brown, 2009)
- Los Angeles BJJ Pro Champion (2016)
- World Championship Silver (2000 blue junior, 2009/2015)
- Pan American Championship silver (2004 brown weight + absolute, 2007 weight + absolute, 2008)
- Pan American No-Gi Championship silver (2008)
- Brazilian National Championship silver (1998 child yellow, 2006 brown absolute, 2009)
- World Championship bronze (2002 purple, 2004 brown weight + absolute, 2005 brown absolute, 2007/2008)
- Pan American No-Gi Championship bronze (2008 absolute)
- European Open Championship bronze (2010 absolute)
- Brazilian National Championship bronze (2007)
- ADCC Finals Bronze (2007)

FAVORITE POSITION/TECHNIQUE: Very Good Overall Game
WEIGHT DIVISION: Peso Medio (Middle Weight) – 181lbs/82kg
TEAM/ASSOCIATION: Alliance

"I WAS SO OBSESSED AND IN LOVE WITH JIU-JITSU THAT ALL OF MY FREE TIME WAS SPENT DOING THAT."

WORDS WITH TARSIS HUMPHREYS

So, you are Fabio Gurgel's first black belt champion that has been with him since white belt?
Yes. I'm the first Fabio Gurgel student to start from the white belt to go win a world title under black belt.

How old were you when you started training?
I was thirteen years old. I started in 1997. Next year will be 20 years.

Wow! And when did you get your black belt?
I got my black belt in 2006. At the last World Championship in Brazil. One week before the Worlds. In 2006, I won the brown belt division in the Brazilian Nationals in my weight and in the Open Class. Then I won the Pan American Championship. Again, in my weight division and Open Class, and one week before [the Worlds] Fabio promoted me to black belt.

So when you were thirteen, how did you discover jiu-jitsu?
A friend of mine started practicing jiu-jitsu with Behring and was getting really good at it. I'd never seen jiu-jitsu before, only karate, tae kwon do and capoeira. So then he showed me an armbar and the rear naked choke. Right away, I fell in love with the movement. I saw how effective jiu-jitsu was. I practiced other arts but we were kids and were never able to hit each other in the face, so I never felt like it was effective as a kid. So as my friend showed me the armbar and mata leao [rear naked choke] and I was able to effectively apply those techniques, I started to realize that this was a big deal and I felt that I could truly protect myself against somebody stronger than me. Eventually, my mother enrolled me into Fabio Gurgel's school, in which she helped to pay for by teaching English to Fabio.

So from white to black, how often did you train?
Every day. I never ever thought about doing anything else but jiu-jitsu. I remember as a kid going on vacation from school, I would say to myself "Wow! Now I have two times to train, in the morning and in the evening". I never really thought about traveling or partying. I was so obsessed and in love with jiu-jitsu that all of my free time was spent doing that. I started going to the university in Brazil, but quit three times, and I quit because of the jiu-jitsu.

What did you want to study in school?
First, physical education. But I thought, I already have jiu-jitsu so then I'll try law. I tried to become a lawyer. I then switched to publicity and marketing, which I did for one year. But then the big tournaments, with prize money, started happening more in the U.S. So when I would come back from the tournaments, I fell behind so much with the tests and work and it became very hard to consolidate school and jiu-jitsu.

When did you move to the United States?
Last May.

So your mother taught you English?
[Laughing] Not really. I learned a little bit in the schools taking basic lessons. She introduced me to English, but we never sat for hours practicing and we never had conversations in English. I learned by myself just doing the tournaments and spending time with my friends in the U.S.

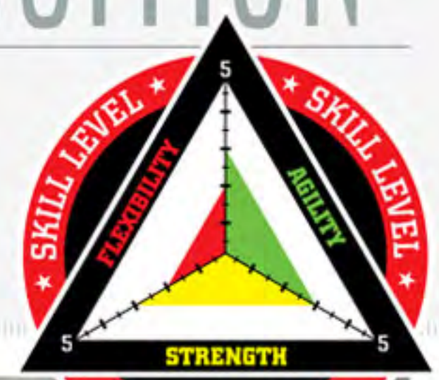
You've dislocated your shoulder and had surgeries to both knees. What other injuries have you suffered?
I broke my front tooth, I broke this bone right here [points to his left orbital bon], I had injury on my ankle, I broke my thumb. [I've had] many injuries. I try so hard in jiu-jitsu and I do not regret my choice. That is not the mentality of a champion. Injuries are always going to happen.

Which was the worst when it came to recovery?
Oh, the knees for sure! The shoulder was super easy to come back. But the knees, as you break the ligaments and get the surgery, all of the muscles around it get very weak. And until you recover it, you need to walk and support the knee. Some muscles get strength and the other ones, no. The ACL is hard to recover.

A year from now, what will you have liked to achieve, personally and in jiu-jitsu, now that you're in the United States?
To be honest, I've already reached all my goals. But, you know how it is. We always want more. I didn't get the first place in the ADCC. So, it's one tournament that I think I want to be the number one. I think it's a different tournament. It's nice. Of course I want another word title and I think that next year I will be ready to try that.

CLOCK CHOKE FROM TURTLE POSITION

Tarsis teaches a different kind of clock choke that prevents many of the common escapes from the traditional version. Instead of walking his hips around like a clock to get the choke, he jumps his hips right to the finishing position. He also uses a double grip on one lapel which makes it very hard for your opponent to roll out of the submission.

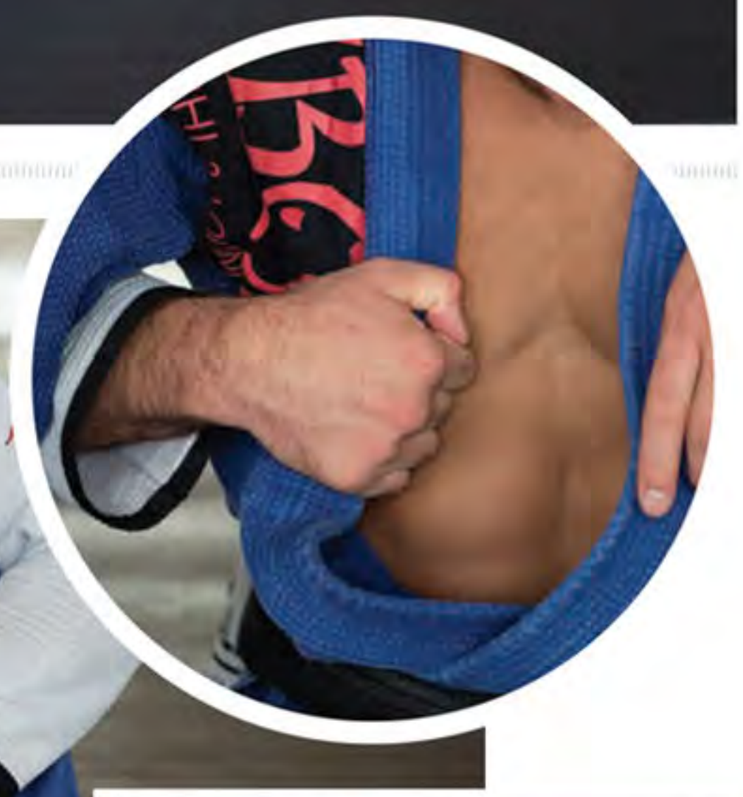


STEP 1

Start on your opponent's back in Turtle position with your weight on their lower back, slightly off to the side. You don't want to be directly behind your opponent, as they can escape more easily. Your weight should be on your hips and not too much on your toes.

STEP 2

Use your right hand to reach underneath your opponent's arm and grab his collar. This will prevent him from escaping to that side and sets up the collar for the choke.



STEP 3

Your opponent will most likely be driving his chin down to protect his neck. Use your grip on the collar to punch the collar down tight toward his chest and underneath his chin.

STEP 4

Use your left hand to reach over your opponent's near shoulder and grab the far collar on top of your right hand. The grip doesn't have to be too tight around your opponent's neck in this position.

STEP 5

Once you've set your grips, post your left leg out first then make a big jump forward to land with your ribs on the back of his neck. Scissor your legs so your bottom leg is in front and your top leg is back.

STEP 6

To finish the choke lift your hips up off the mat and pull up with your left arm while putting pressure down with your ribs.

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TARSIS BULL PASS

This is a variation of a Long Step Pass Tarsis created that involves using your head to make pressure on your opponent's hips to secure the pass. It's important to maintain the same grips throughout the pass until you've securely stabilized your opponent in side control.

STEP 1

Start from a low passing position with your right leg between your opponent's legs and your left leg outside. Pass your opponent's left leg to your left hand and make a grip on the pants. Then use your right arm to make a grip on his collar.

STEP 2

Punch your opponent's left leg down and drop your right hip to the mat. Drop your head ionto his stomach/chest as you're dropping to the mat. Then long step your left leg back to clear his guard.

STEP 3

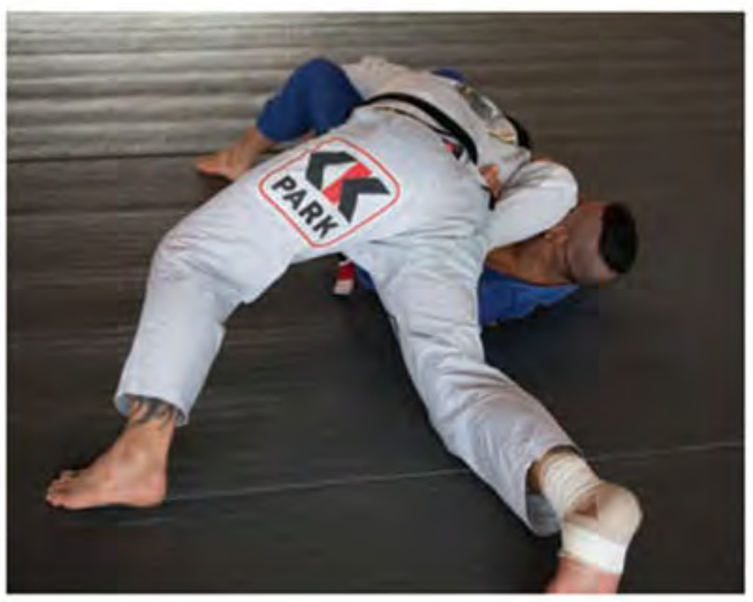
Place your forehead on your opponent's stomach then lift your hips up to pull your bottom leg back to square your hips to him.

STEP 4

Walk your feet closer to a North/South position, however, remain in side control and lift your hips up high, putting pressure forward with your head.

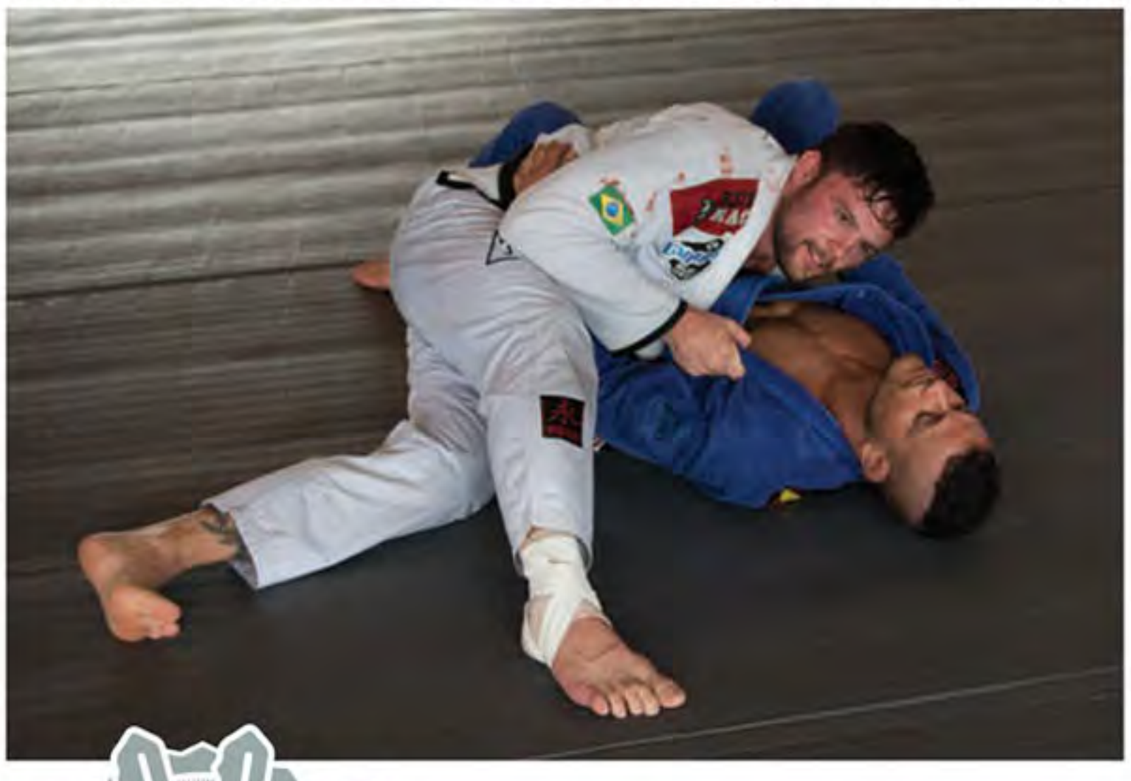
STEP 5

Use your legs to pressure forward and drive his hips to the mat.



STEP 6

Once you've flattened him to the mat, switch your hips by dropping your left hip to the mat to stabilize the position.



KEY POINTS

If your opponent pushes away to regain guard, you can back up then start the pass again from Step 3, moving slightly to North/South then driving your head into his stomach to fl tten him again.

HYPNOTIK

THE ART OF GREATNESS

MMA WAREHOUSE

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TRIANGLE FROM SIDE CONTROL OFF BULL PASS

Once Tarsis passes the guard, he likes to immediately go for an attack. In this case, he used his Long Step Bull Pass to achieve side control then sets up the triangle for the finish.

STEP 1

Off the Tarsis Bull Pass, square your hips to your opponent and come to traditional side control. Immediately make the crossface by hugging your opponent's head.

STEP 2

Pick up your hips slightly and slide your knees down to scoop up your opponent's near arm underneath your right knee. Come back up to side control securing the arm tightly between your thigh and elbow.

STEP 3

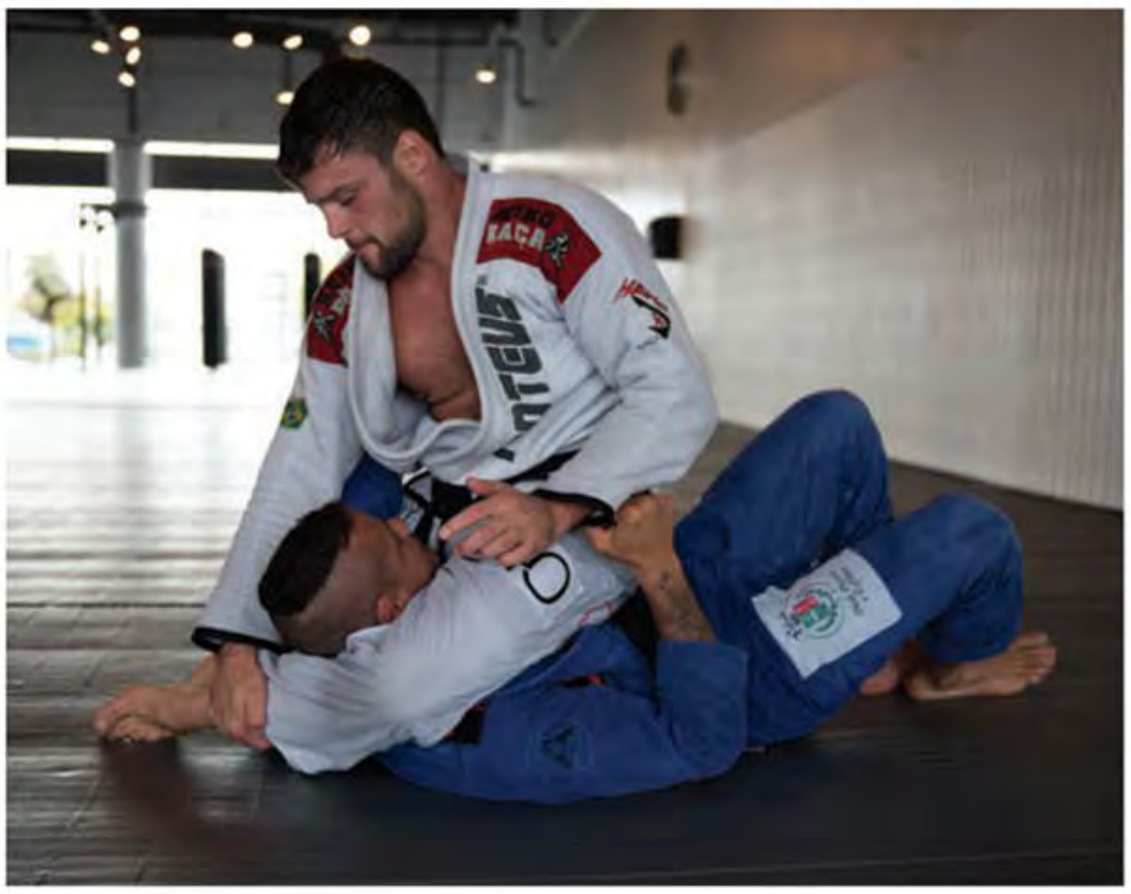
To set up the triangle, start by controlling your opponent's far wrist, pressing it hard against his chest.

STEP 4

Lean toward your opponent's head and swing your left leg up and over his chest. Pick up the back of his head to clamp your leg around the back of his neck.

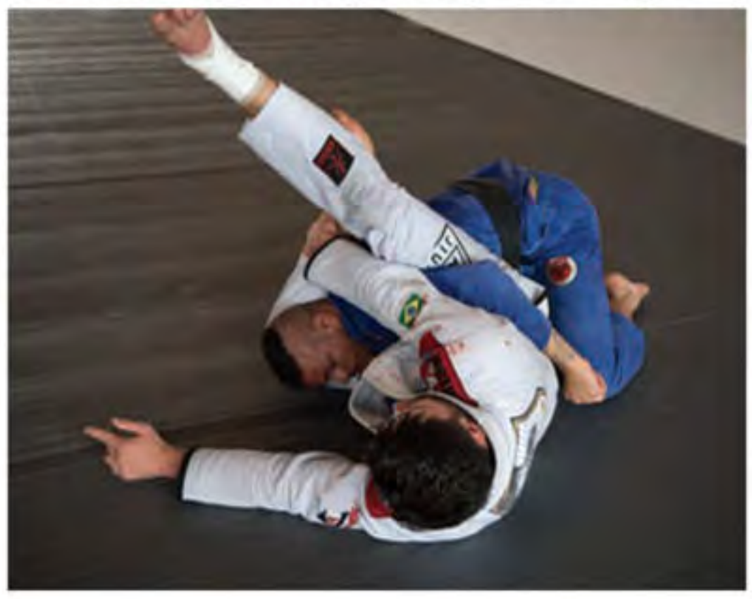
STEP 5

Grab your left shin with your right hand to close the triangle, then put your free hand out on the mat for base.



STEP 6

Roll forward onto your side, then lock the traditional triangle with your legs and let go of your shin with your hand.



STEP 7

To finish the triangle, roll flat to your back and pull down on the back of your opponent's head while squeezing your knees together.

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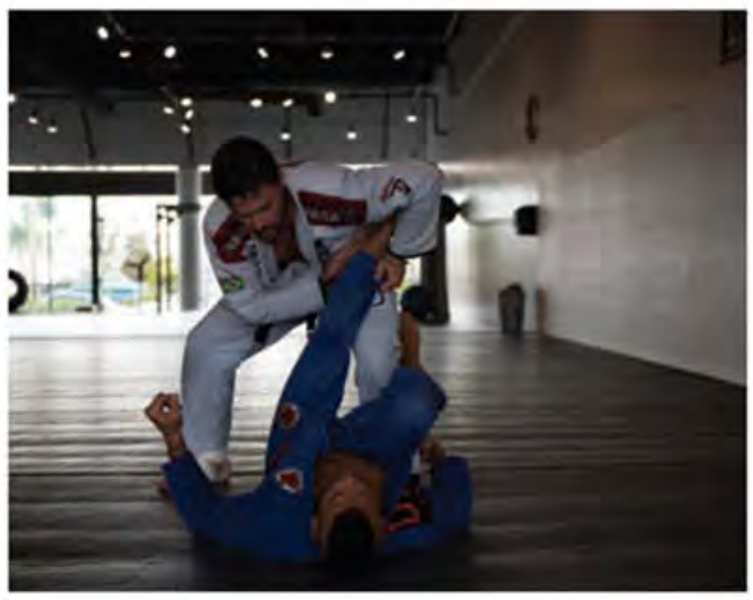
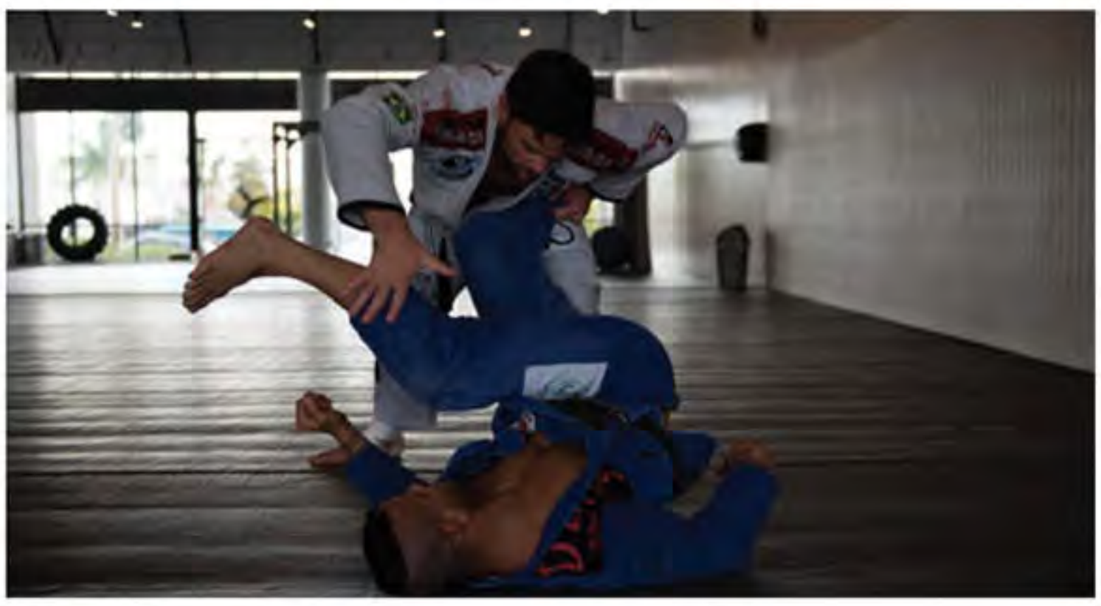
SIDE SMASH PASS OFF LEG DRAG COUNTER

The Leg Drag is a popular pass from De La Riva guard, however, sometimes your opponent can counter your pass by weaving his free leg in front you to stop your advance. Tarsis shows us how to take advantage of this counter and finish the pass.

STEP 1

Attempt the Leg Drag from De La Riva by holding your opponent's left ankle with both hands- right hand grabbing the ankle, left hand gripping the pants. Pull his leg across your body to your left hip.





STEP 2

Your opponent will attempt to counter the Leg Drag by swinging his left leg over and in front of you. Allow him to do this. Then with your right hand, reach over his right leg for his left collar while maintaining the Leg Drag with your left hand.

STEP 3

Immediately lower your weight down onto his legs with heavy pressure and pull yourself in tight to eliminate any open space.

STEP 4

Switch the collar grip from your right hand to your left hand and keep pressure across his neck with your left forearm by driving your elbow down to the mat. Then make a grip around his left ankle with your right hand.

STEP 5

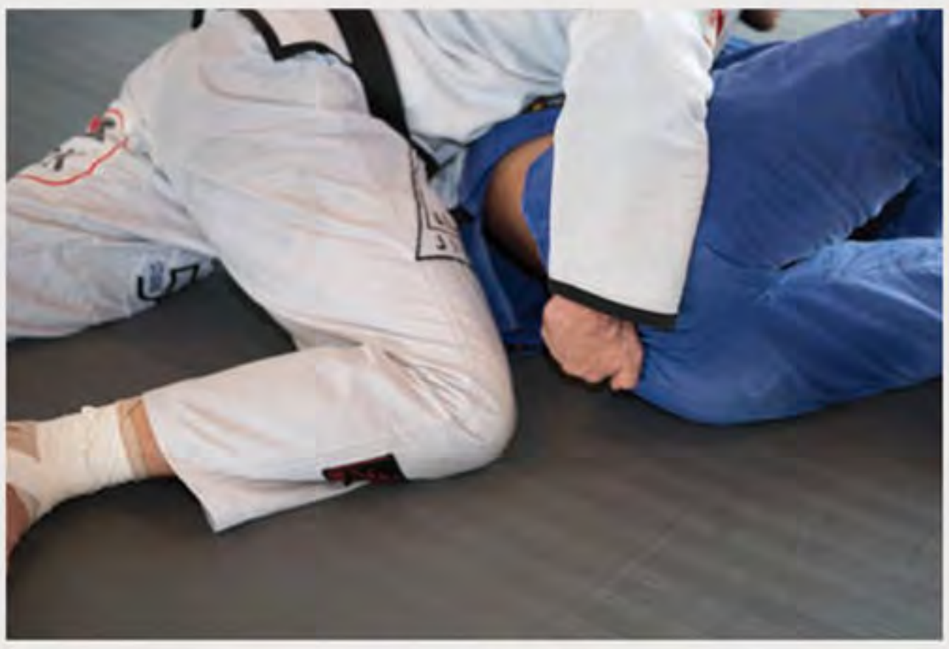
Drive his left leg to the ground and come around to side control while maintaining heavy pressure.

BONUS

SIDE CHOKE FINISH FROM PASS

STEP 6

From here you can attempt to finish the fight with a choke. First, reach under your opponent's right leg and grab around his biceps to control the far arm. Then, drive your left elbow down and up around his neck to get the tap.



STEP 7

If your opponent extends his right leg to break your grip, you can adjust your position to continue with the choke. Move your right hand to make a grip on the back of his pants then lift his hips up off the mat.

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Tarsis is having just a little bit too much fun.

STEP 8

Next, step your right leg up to prop up his lower back on your knee. Then drive your left elbow down and around his neck to get the finish.

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KIMURA TRAP COUNTER TO KIMURA

The Kimura Trap is a vulnerable position to be in and Tarsis has developed a way to counter it and turn it into an attack of your own.

SET UP

STARTING FROM THE KIMURA TRAP, YOUR OPPONENT HAS MADE THE FIGURE 4 LOCK ON YOUR ARM AND JUMPED OVER TO YOUR BACK.

STEP 1

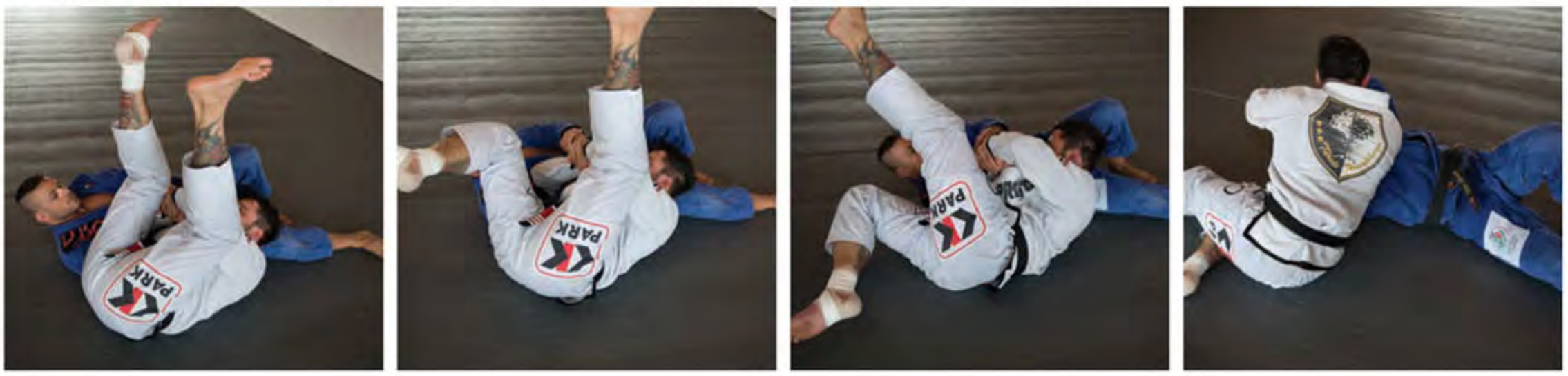
Grab your trapped wrist with your free hand and pull it up and in toward your chest.

STEP 2

Walk your legs toward your opponent's head to square your hips parallel to his. The goal is to free your elbow from above his biceps so you can drive it to the mat.

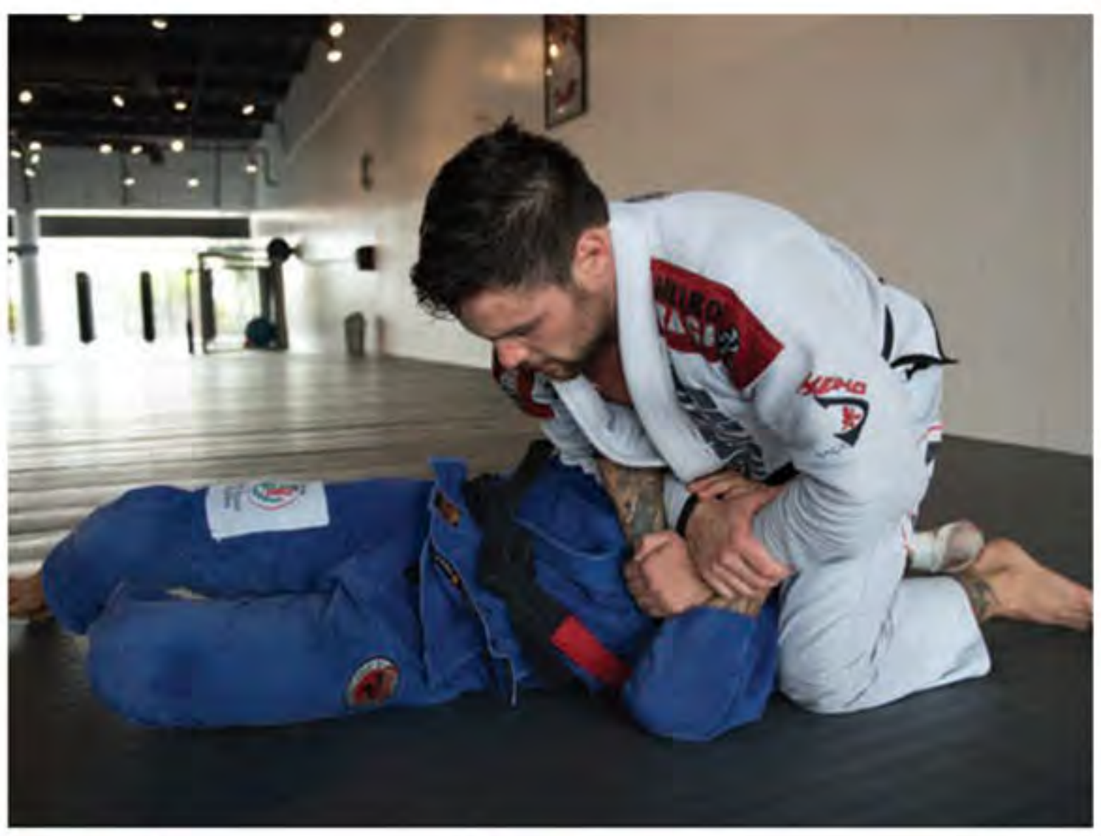
STEP 3

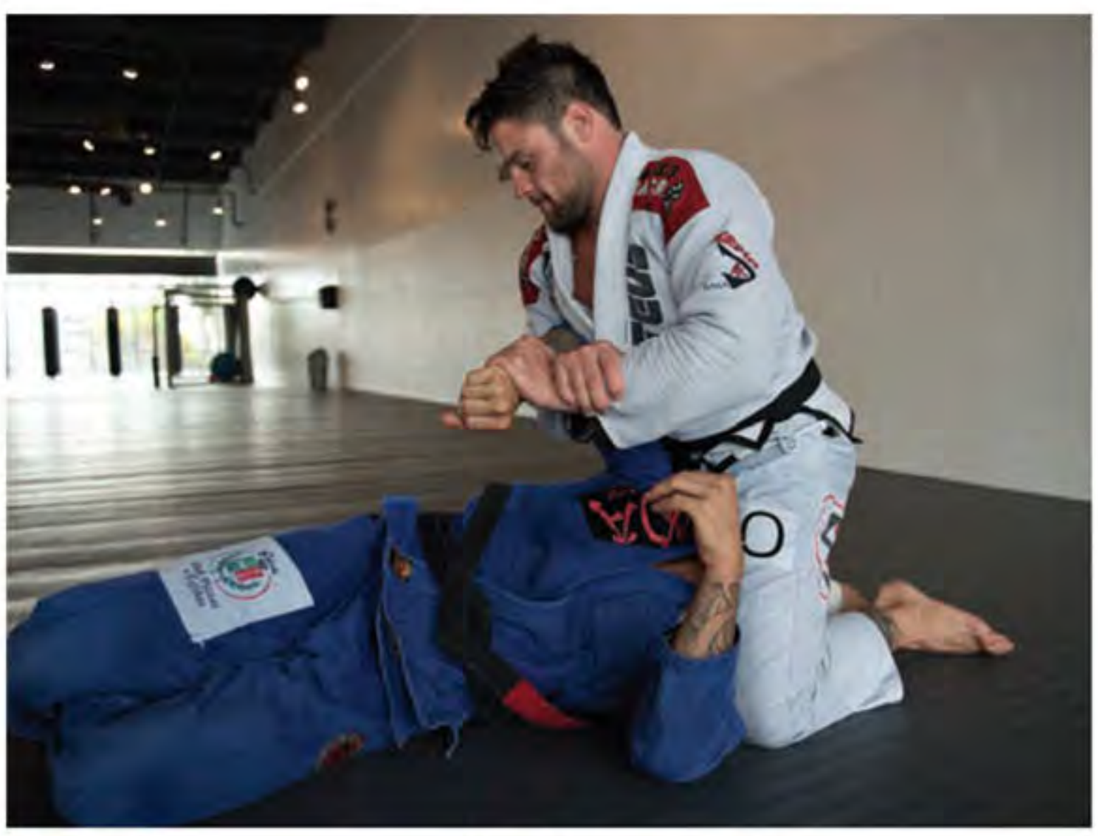
Drive your elbow down to the mat as you scissor your legs and turn your hips down to the mat to sit up.



STEP 4

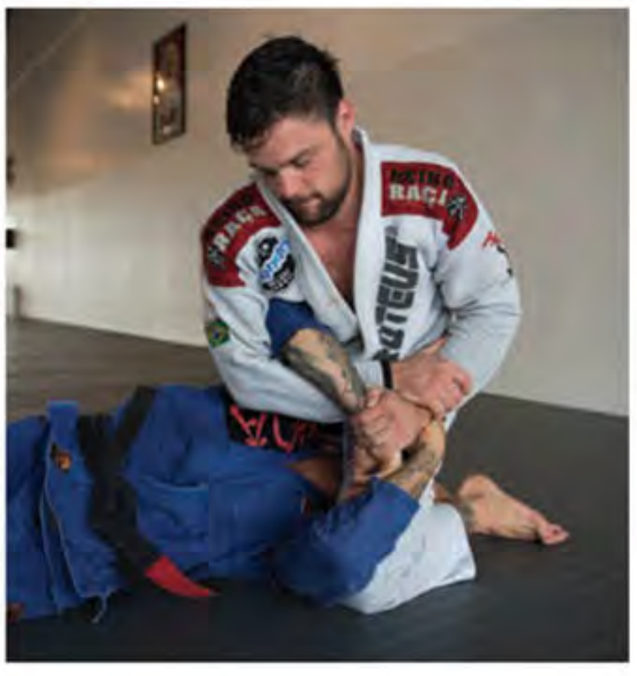
Step your leg over his head and pinch your other knee in tight to set a strong base on top.





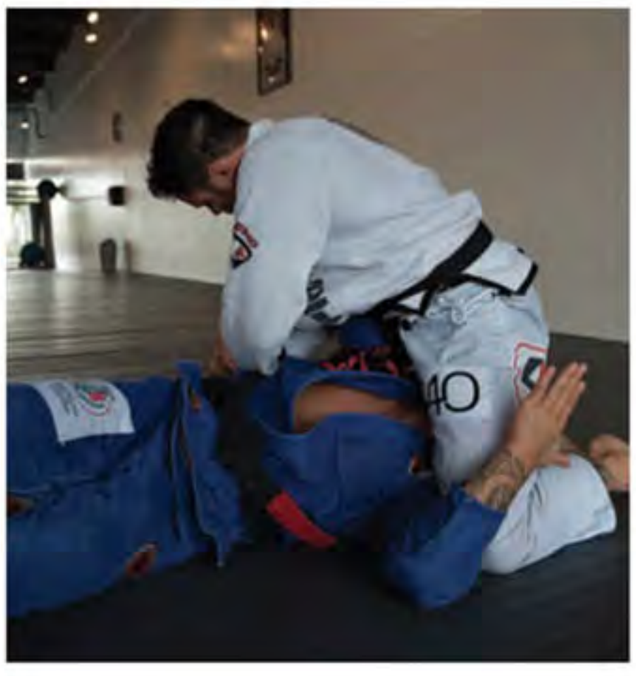
STEP 5

Set up the Kimura by gripping his right wrist with your left hand then reach under his elbow with your right hand to grab your own wrist. Break his grips by pushing his wrists and body down to the left while pulling his hands in toward you.



STEP 6

Once his grip is broken, pull up on his arm and turn it to the right behind his body to lock the shoulder and force the tap.



DE LA RIVA X GUARD TO BACK CONTROL TO CROSS CHOKE

STEP 1

Start from Spider Guard with both feet on your opponent's biceps while holding the sleeves. A common Spider Guard pass is to push and pin the feet to the ground then walk around to side control. When your opponent does this, sit up, abandon your sleeve grips, and control his biceps.

STEP 2

From Sit-Up Guard, use your right hand to pass your opponent's left hand underneath his legs to your left hand, making a grip on the sleeve. Then use your right hand to grip his far collar and break his posture.

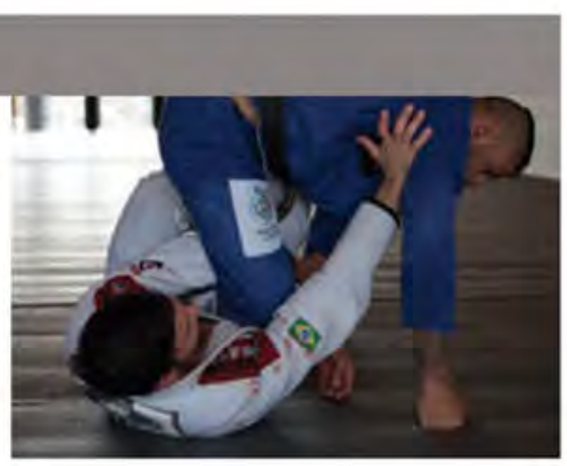
STEP 3

Next, insert your left leg through your opponent's legs, making a deep De La Riva hook on the front of his far leg. Then, insert your right leg through underneath your left leg to hook the back of his far leg, making the De La Riva X Guard.

STEP 4

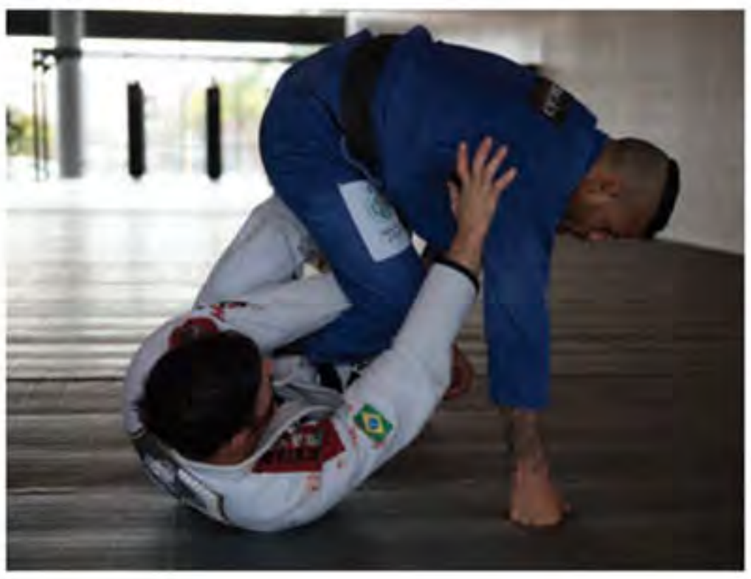
Sit back, pulling your opponent onto you, then use your right hand to grab behind his near armpit.

REVERSE



STEP 5

Push your opponent forward with your right hand to create space then guard his right leg with your hand as your angle yourself behind him.



STEP 6

Remove your bottom De La Riva X hook and circle it around the back of your opponent's right leg, making a hook behind his knee. Move your right hand to grip the back of his pants.

STEP 7

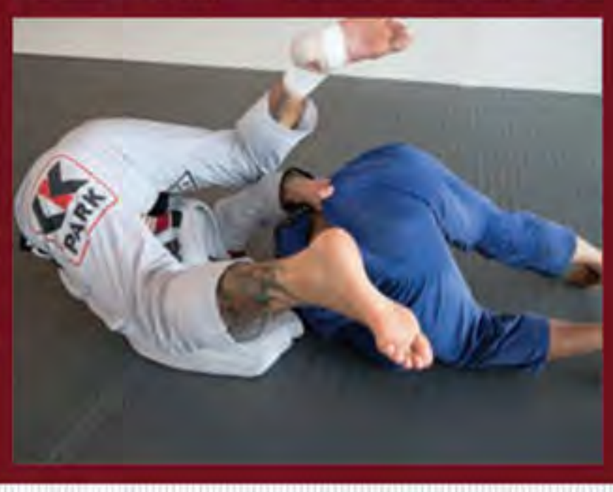
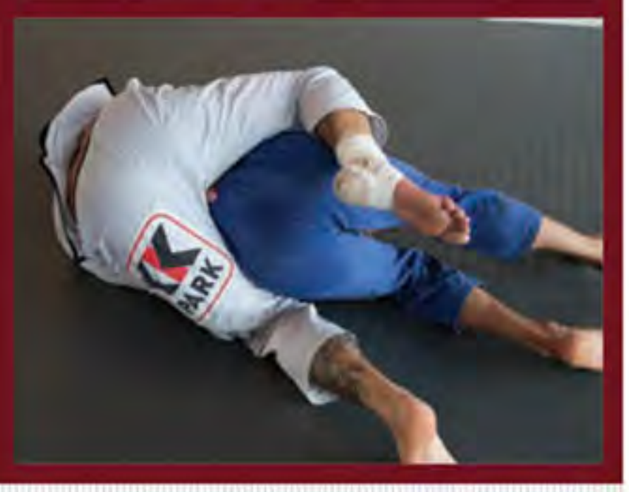
Pull down on his waistband, punching your right hand to the ground and extend your legs forward to pull your opponent down.

STEP 8

Sit up and abandon the sleeve grip to make a grip on the back of his collar with your left hand. Put in both hooks with your legs around your opponent's waist.

NOTE

Tarsis likes the grips on the back of the collar and pants for control. If his opponent tries to roll out of the position, Tarsis can easily follow by rolling with him and maintain control with those grips. Then he can insert his hooks again and start to attack a submission.

STEP 9

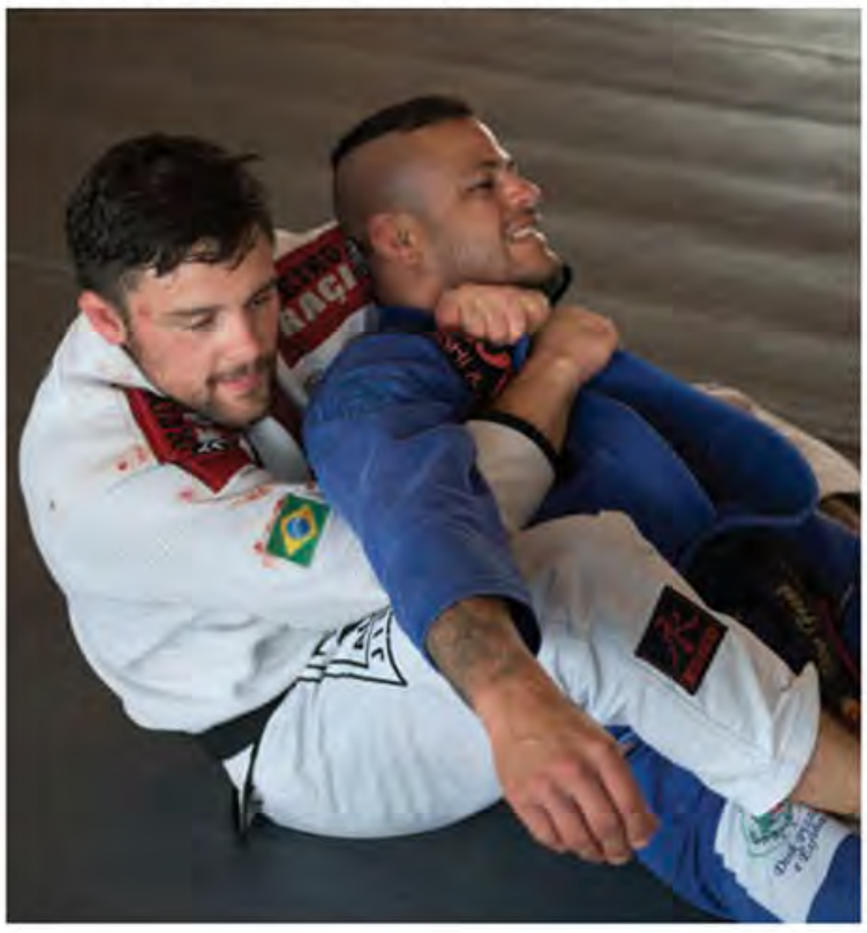
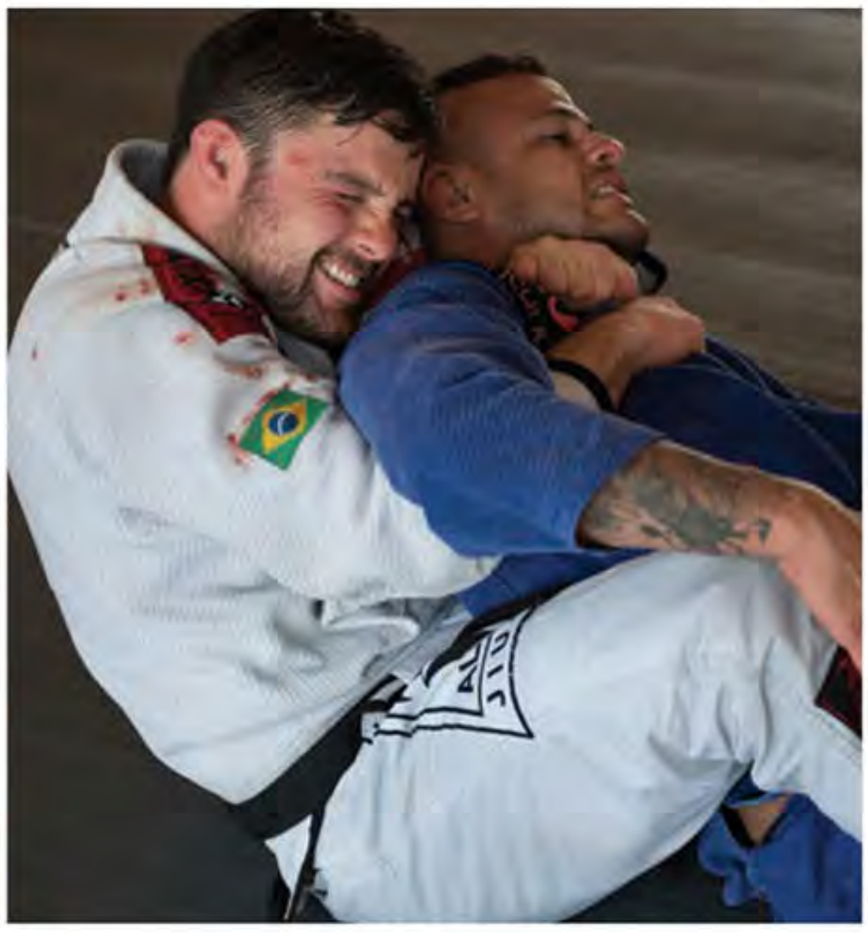
To set up the cross choke, move your grip on the pants under your opponent's right arm and open his collar. Move the grip from his back collar over his left shoulder to receive the collar from your right hand. Grab deep around your opponent's neck.

STEP 10

Then grab the opposite collar underneath your left hand with your right. You can grab higher up on the collar by raising your left elbow to raise your opponent's chin to make space.

STEP 11

To finish the choke, place your left shoulder behind your opponent's head, eliminating any free space, then straighten and push your wrists down.

Tarsis has shown a wide variety of techniques that can be used for a variety of situations on the mat. Although it's common to favor certain positions in training, it's important not to neglect any areas you will inevitably find yourself in. Being well rounded will develop confidence and prepare you for anything your opponents may throw at you. It's always the positions we don't like that we need to drill and develop the most. Use these positions to make your game like Tarsis': well rounded and dangerous from everywhere.

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TECHNIQUE

ROLLIN' WITH RODRIGO TEIXEIRA

WORDS: **JIM LAWSON** | PHOTOS: **MIKE VELEZ**

IN ISSUE 50 WE INTRODUCED YOU TO RODRIGO TEIXEIRA AND HIS GLOBE TROTTING WAYS. JIU-JITSU HAS LEAD HIM TO EVERY CORNER OF THE PLANET. Rodrigo is an accomplished grappler himself with over 25 years of jiu-jitsu under his belt. In those decades of training he's rolled or competed against many of the absolute legends in the art. On a recent trip Rodrigo found himself in Jiu-Jitsu Magazine Headquarters and showed us a few of his favorite techniques. Enjoy!

PHOTO CREDIT: **NICHOLAS GOH**

SITTING GUARD TO MOUNT SWEEP

When starting from the Sitting Guard, this is a highly effective sweep that will earn you six points in competition, two for the sweep and four for the mount as well as put you in a great place to finish.

STEP 1

Rodrigo grabs his opponent's lapel with his right hand being sure to rotate his knuckles towards his opponent's throat. Rodrigo's left hand grips the material outside of his opponent's right knee.

STEP 2

Now, Rodrigo drops his left elbow to the mat, making sure to maintain pressure against his opponent's neck with his right hand.

STEP 3

Once grips are established and Rodrigo's elbow is planted to the mat, he slides his left leg through his opponent's legs, making sure that his knee clears past his opponent's legs and hips. At the same time, he gets a butterfly hook on his opponent's inner thigh with his right foot.

REVERSE

STEP 4

Rodrigo bumps his left knee against his opponent's backside and at the same time pulls his opponent using his grips and butterfly hook until his opponent is directly over him.

STEP 5

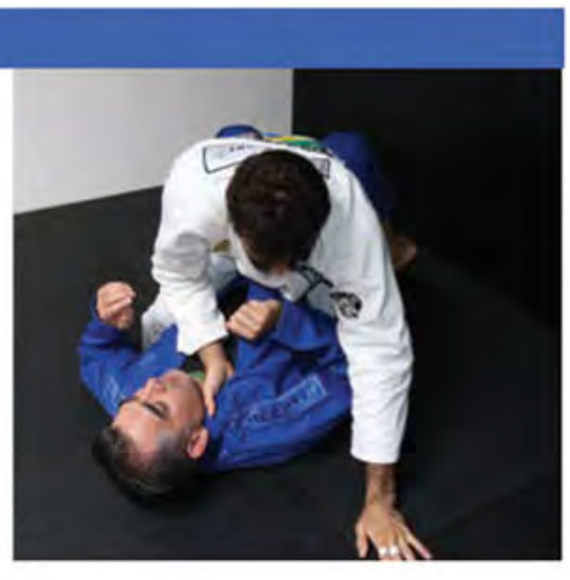
With his opponent suspended above, Rodrigo places his left foot on his opponent's right hip and transfers his left foot from butterfly hook to his opponent's opposite side hip.

STEP 6

Once Rodrigo's feet are in position, he uses his left hand to grab his opponent's lower right bicep (near the elbow) to break down his opponent's post.

STEP 7

As soon as Rodrigo breaks down his opponent's posting arm, he simultaneously lifts his own hips, driving his legs upward, effectively flipping his opponent over and following the momentum into mount position.



SITTING GUARD SWEEP TO BACK

This is a variation of the previous move in which Rodrigo sees (and feels) an opportunity and chooses to take the opponent's back. This too is a six point move in competition. The entry and setup from the previous technique, up to Step 4, is identical. So, let's start from there.

STEP 1

After completing the first four steps from the previous technique, Rodrigo establishes an X-Guard on his opponent's left thigh rather than placing his left foot under his right hip.

STEP 2

At this point, Rodrigo releases his right grip on the collar and establishes a new grip on his opponent's pants (or lower gi top) on the outside right hip.

STEP 3

With grips established, Rodrigo pulls with both arms while using his X-Guard to slightly bring his knees towards his chest, shifting his oppone t's weight directly over him, coiling up his legs, and preparing for his next movement.

STEP 4

Coiled up, Rodrigo pushes both grips towards his feet while stretching his legs forward, keeping the right hookinto his opponent's thigh, and opening up his left leg turning his opponent's back towards him.

STEP 5

Once his opponent's back is towards him, Rodrigo brings his left leg bac in and over his opponent's left side. ere he establishes his hooks and seat belt grips with his hands to effectively take the back.

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SET UP AGAINST STANDING OPPONENT

Here, Rodrigo shows how he can use the two previous techniques against his opponent even if they're in a standing position in front of him. The entry to get his opponent elevated is from a different position (Spider Guard), but once there, he may continue to use either technique.

STEP 1

Against a standing opponent, Rodrigo establishes Spider Guard with his right foot on his opponent's same side bicep and his left foot against his opponent's same side hip. His right hand establishes a grip on his opponent's cross side collar. His left hand uses a pistol grip on the very bottom of his opponent's right leg.

STEP 2

Rodrigo transfers his right foot from his opponent's bicep to the back of his opponent's knee and uses that foot to pull his opponent directly over him. He's careful not to disconnect his left foot from his opponent's hip. Note that when he pulls his opponent over him, he shifts his left knee behind his opponent's right leg.

STEP 3

As Rodrigo is shifting his opponent forward, he also is using his grips to lift his opponent as well. From here, Rodrigo has the choice to execute either of the two previously explained moves by either shifting each foot on his opponent's hips or going into the X-Guard.

It's time to face 2017!

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10 — BJJ Tour Connecticut

24 — All Star

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SITTING GUARD TRUCK DRIVER PASS

This is a very simple yet very effective pass that once you try will be amazed at how simple and effective it is. When you think about passing and when you and your opponent are both sitting, you'd think you'd have to stand at some point to effectively pass. However, with this pass, when done correctly, you just have to basically fall to the side.

STEP 1

Against an opponent who is playing sitting guard Rodrigo, from his knees, establishes a grip with his right hand on the backside of the armpit (on the seam) of his opponent's gi on the same side.

STEP 2

Once the grip is established, he begins to pull his opponent's shoulder towards his own knee on the same side.

STEP 3

Once he initiates a strong pull, Rodrigo drops his head into his opponent's chest.

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STEP 4

Rodrigo drop steps his left leg behind himself while maintaining his pull. Rodrigo is sure to keep his right elbow close to his ribs after they fall to their side.

STEP 5

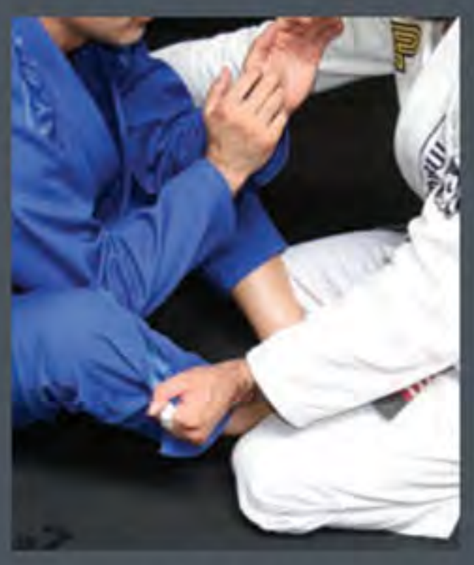
As his opponent falls, Rodrigo makes sure to keep his head heavy to his opponent's chest and uses his free left hand to control either the top or bottom leg of his opponent.

STEP 6

Finally, Rodrigo shifts his hips, goes for the far side underhook, and establishes side control.

KEY POINTS

If available, at the initiation of the move, Rodrigo may establish a grip on his opponent's leg with his left hand for greater control during the pass.



Your opponent's counter to this is to base out with their left knee and leg while you're driving your head into their chest. Be aware of this. Don't initiate if they're taking this posture, wait for them to bring that leg back in.

GEAR LAB

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VULKAN HAS A STORIED HISTORY AS BEING ONE OF THE FIRST BRAZILIAN GI COMPANIES TO IMPORT ITS BRAZILIAN MADE GIS INTO THE UNITED STATES. WE'RE REVIEWING ONE OF THEIR NEWEST PRO GIS. This line of kimono is designed with competitors in mind, but the weekend warrior shouldn't shy away. This Brazilian made gi uses a honeycomb weave fabric and a rubber lapel to stand out from other gis. It's priced at $189.98 on the Vulkan website. It is found in sizes A0 – A5 (A5 adds $20 to the price). Vulkan offers the gi in five different colors: red, black, white, blue, and navy. It's important to note that a women's version is also available with a unique cut. For this review we tested the men's black in A1 cut.

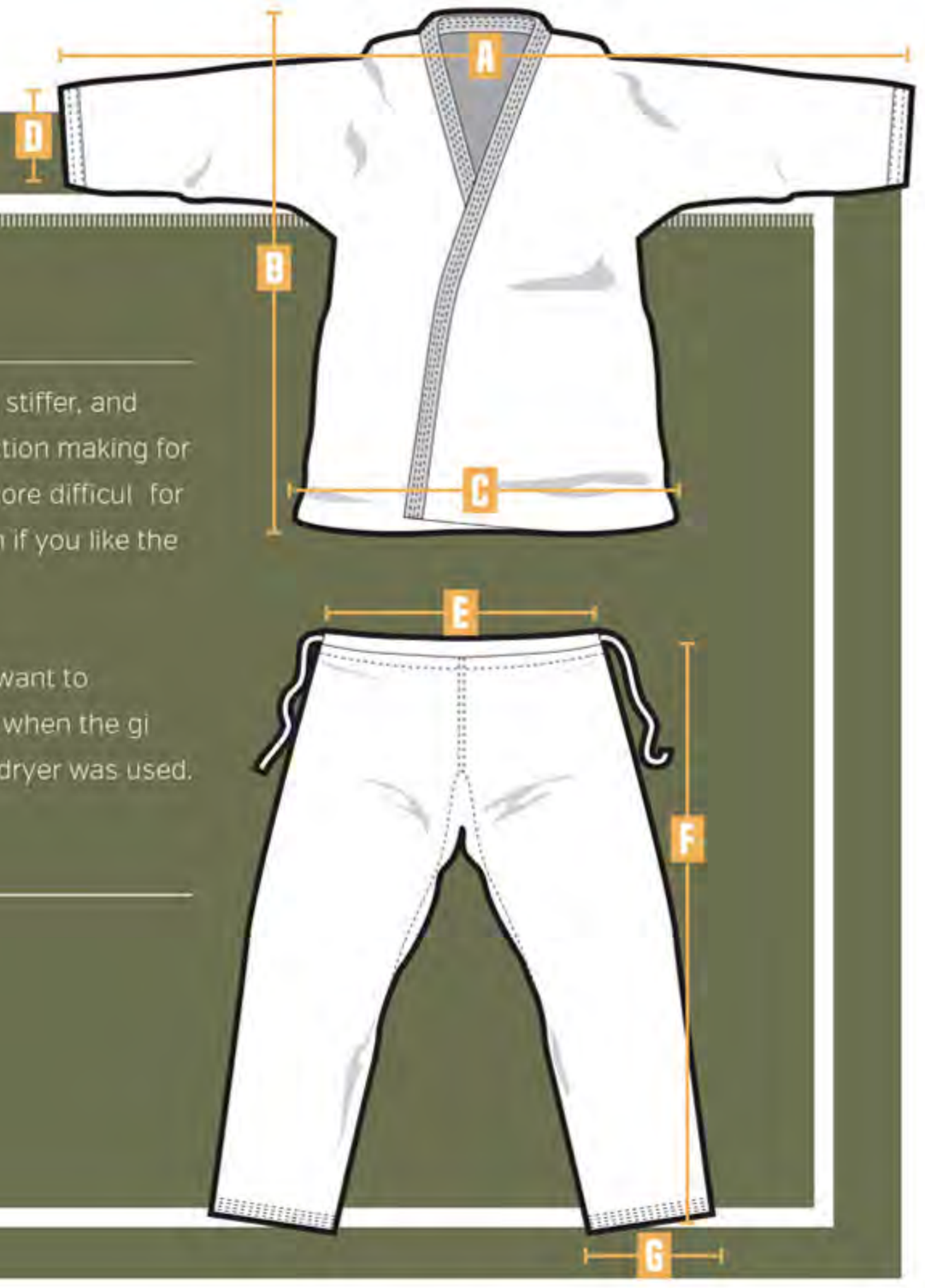
THE JACKET

The jacket is built with the superior quality that we would expect from Vulkan. Vulkan patches can be found on the jacket's shoulders and outside lapel. When testing the black gi, I think the gold contrast on the patchwork looked very slick. The jacket is lightweight, only weighing about 2.5lbs. This in conjunction with the 100% cotton material makes the gi very soft and pliable. This, however, isn't the same for the collar. It has a rubber interior which gives it a good amount of rigidity.

THE PANTS

Like the jacket, the pants are made of 100% cotton and are very light. The knee and shin area are reinforced with an extra bit of material that I didn't notice at first. This is a feature that is typically found in competition kimonos. With only one side patch along the right outside thigh, the gi pants contain little branding. The pant ties are the traditional drawstring ties you'd find on most gis.

GEAR LAB



FIT AND FEEL

According to Vulkan, the jacket collar is made of a rubber material. It definitely feels stiffer, and you'll notice it the first time you put the jacket on. It also tapers more in the mid section making for a slimmer fit. This reduces the amount of material [and weight], but also makes it more difficul for opponents to establish a grip. At 5'9" and 170lbs, the A1 fits perfectly for competition if you like the slightly shorter sleeve feel. The cotton fabric is soft and very easy to move in.

I normally purchase A2 gis and shrink them to get the fit I like. I wouldn't, however, want to purchase the A2 of this particular gi as we noticed there was pretty much no shrink when the gi was washed. Please note that for the purpose of this test, we hang dried the gi, no dryer was used.

MEASUREMENTS

BRAND NEW [A1]

- **A** 60"
- **B** 32"
- **C** 21"
- **D** 6"
- **E** 22"
- **F** 36"
- **G** 9"

WEIGHT:

Pants: 1lb 2.3oz

Jacket: 2lbs 5.0oz

Together: 3lbs 7.3oz

AFTER 3 WASHES AT 40° C

- **A** 60"
- **B** 31"
- **C** 21"
- **D** 6"
- **E** 22"
- **F** 36"
- **G** 9"

ROLLING IN IT

The first time you roll or train with this gi you will notice the collar. The rubber material it is made of is stiff. I also have to admit that it makes the gi a little uncomfortable the first wear. However, this proved to be beneficial as it is typically more difficul to choke an opponent with a stiff collar. It's lack of malleability means that it becomes a tad more difficul to secure a collar choke. Will it dramatically help your jiu-jitsu to have this advantage? No. At the end of the day, having a special lapel or gi feature will not turn bad jiu-jitsu into great jiu-jitsu. After a couple wears and rolls, the collar does become more flexible and comfortable.

I personally am more comfortable in a lightweight gi so I always prefer to roll in them. They typically can't take the same beating as other gis due to their lightweight design. This gi is tough, but it's also very well built and has a heavier feel than it actually weighs. With proper maintenance, it will be years of consistent training before you start to notice any sign of premature wear.

CONCLUSION

At $189.98, the VKN Pro Gi is on the higher end of the price scale. However, at the time of this testing, Vulkan is running a 15% off speical on their website. That brings the price down to about $161 which is a pretty reasonable price for a gi like this. You can be assured that this gi will last you a couple of years of training. The gi is also 100% cotton, super soft without being stretchy and made in Brazil. The rubber collar design makes it a tad more difficul to get submitted, but it's not something a competitor should rely on. if you purchase the VKN Pro Gi, you will be purchasing a soft solid gi design and tool moving forward in jiu-jitsu.

VERDICT

HIGHLIGHT & SPECS

- Rubber Collar Design
- Lightweight
- Almost no shrink
- Super soft but n t stretchy

VERDICT

Good value when discount is factored in, super soft, no shrink and authentic Brazilian!

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VALUE	★★★½☆
QUALITY	★★★★½
OVERALL	★★★★½

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WORDS AND PHOTOS: **PATRICK FLORES**

WE RECENTLY HAD A FEATURE ON RODRIGO FREITAS. ALTHOUGH AN ACTIVE COMPETITOR, RODRIGO DOES QUITE A BIT OF TEACHING AS WELL. One of his students, Ian Sanders, is an active black belt competitor. He's competed at various tournaments including the Eddie Bravo Invitational. We've always found it interesting to see how a teacher can influence their student's jiu-jitsu, while the student forges their own unique style. The diversity in Rodrigo's jiu-jitsu has carried over into Ian's as we will see in his use of technique.

Ending up on your opponent's back is one of the best positions to be in. Your opponent has few options, while you have many. Getting to the back position can prove to be difficult. ost grapplers will fight tooth and nail to prevent it from happening. Thankfully, Ian Sanders has a couple of cool ways to take the back from two different positions. Ian also incorporates the use of the Berimbolo into his technique

BERIMBOLO FROM THE TOP

A guard player in the De La Riva (DLR) position traditionally performs the Berimbolo technique. The DLR guard allows the guard player to initiate the inversion without losing control of their opponent. Ian, however, shows us a creative way to use the Berimbolo in conjunction with a leg drag to take the back from a standing position.

STEP 1

Ian starts off in his opponent's DLR guard. His opponent will likely be trying to control Ian's posture by pulling down on the collar. Ian breaks the collar grip and quickly grips his opponent's pants. He grips the DLR leg on the inside while gripping the opposite leg on the outside.

STEP 2

In order to better defend the DLR guard, he points his toes and body to the side of the DLR guard. This makes it difficult for his opponent to secure a proper DLR hook.

STEP 3

Ian then grabs the leg placed on his hips with both of his hands and pulls it to the opposite side. This is also known as a leg drag. After the leg is passed, Ian quickly closes the distance between him and his opponent. He finishes this step by grabbing his opponent's same side collar.

STEP 4

Ian then rolls over his shoulder without letting go of any grips. While inverted, he uses his legs to hook and control his opponent's legs. This control prevents his opponent from planting their feet and mounting any sort of escape. As Ian rolls and transitions to the back, he grips his opponent's pants.

REVERSE

STEP 5

Ian finishes the technique by landing on his opponent's back.

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GA	Locust Grove	Matt Minter	678-561-4099
GA	Johns Creek	Francis Fong	770-623-4997
GA	Milton	Jamie Williams	678-824-5760
GA	Sharpsburg	Jorge Jimenez	404-917-4400
GA	Savannah	James Finizio	240-855-4403
GA	Woodstock	Alan Baker	770-926-3030
GA	Villa Rica	Daniel Lawing	770-459-9555
HI	Honolulu	Rylan Lizares	808-834-2550
HI	Maui	Luis Heredia	808-575-9930
ID	Boise/Meridian	Keith Owen	208-846-9119
ID	Pocatello	John Ralph	208-220-1809
ID	Twin Falls	Curtis Yergensen	208-404-4166
IL	Crystal Lake	Jeff Curran	815-356-0454
IL	Elgin	Jeffrey Kim	847-841-8705
IN	Clarksville	Brad Haynes	812-218-8000
KY	Henderson	Darron Morse	270-871-5866
KY	Louisville	Allan Manganello	502-426-0333
KY	Louisville	Scott Smith	502-384-7084
KY	Madisonville	Eric Myers	270-836-0179
LA	Morgan City	Steve Miller	985-384-5425
LA	Monroe	Bryan Mossey	571-236-9906
MD	Annapolis	Jon Garfield	443-962-3826
MD	Rockville	Max Tzentis	301-881-7314
MD	Damascus	Kyle Sefcik	240-207-3212
MD	Monrovia	Cesar Paredes	301-529-6289
MN	Brooklyn Center	Greg Nelson	763-560-5696
MN	Duluth	Cris Johnson	218-269-2588
MN	Saint Louis Park	Ishmael Bentley	952-920-8984
MN	Minneapolis	Vaughn Lodge	612-913-2619
MS	Hattiesburg	Allen Hopkins	601-818-2383
MT	Helena	Don Raulston / Adam Bell	406-465-7858
NC	Charlotte	Mike Streicher	704-846-0707
NC	Greensboro	Gary Mattevi	336-286-7073
NC	Harrisburg	Mark Cukro	704-363-6236
NH	Lebanon	Nicholas Bramlage	919-608-9279
NV	Las Vegas	Mica Cipili	702-214-6414
OH	Cincinnati	James Kelly	513-860-2310
OH	Deleware	Charles Riedmiller	740-362-2222
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OH	Youngstown	Tony Rinaldi	330-782-3869
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OR	Portland	Tom Tegner	503-964-1405
OR	Tigard	Joe Heller	503-360-8692
PA	Altoona	Allen Coble	814-312-3845
PA	Pittsburgh	Sonny Achille	412-531-2122
PA	Pittsburgh	David Wright	412-921-1530
PA	Verona	Joseph Cosentino	724-472-7373
SC	Hilton Head	Ben Rhodes	843-815-5500
SC	Spartanburg	Nathan & Adrian Hayes	864-381-7837
TN	Cleveland	Michael Chastain	423-284-3707
TN	Jamestown	Jared Wells	931-397-7382
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TN	Kingsport	Joe Booher	423-392-0584
TN	Knoxville	John Hosford	865-951-1392
TN	Knoxville	Earl Dunn	865-680-9493
TN	McMinnville	Robin Clark	931-261-4183
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UT	Ogden	Mark Johnson	801-920-6500
UT	Park City	Mike Diaz	801-637-6122
UT	Pleasant Grove	Mark Balcer	801-785-0354
UT	Sandy	John Carlquist	801-561-2535
UT	Salt Lake City	Eddie Edmunds	801-414-9852
UT	Salt Lake City	William Bernales	801-463-1727
UT	Lindon	Ray Griffin	801-513-9775
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VA	Lexington	Seweryn Morgiewicz	540-464-7557
VA	Lynchburg	Jamie Ridgeway	434-846-5425
VA	Portsmouth	Willie Hunter	757-488-3882
VA	Richmond	Joe Gray	804-550-5115
VA	Roanoke	Dennis Hayes	540-345-8609
VA	Herndon	**Pedro Sauer**	703-444-4468
VA	Virginia Beach	Nestor Bayot	757-963-1717
VA	Virginia Beach	Frank Cucci	757-495-7070
WA	Bothell	Bryan Alvarez	425-486-4105
WA	Camas	Mel Locke	360-210-4588
WA	Everett	David Fiedler	425-870-2157
WA	Longview	Robert Slape	360-442-9943
WI	Milwaukee	Jake Klipp	414-737-5315
WI	Milwaukee	Jonathan Friedland	414-248-3595
Australia, Burwood		Robbie Singh	0430 154 012
Australia, Cleveland		Carlos Bozano Collor	61416961125
Australia, Melbourne		Murat Karadenizli	0401 582 738
Australia, Templestowe		David Krstic	0419 365 970
Brazil, Petropolis, RJ		Breno Angelo	24 2237 4874
Brazil, Sao Paulo		Thiago Bertoni	11 7866 1779
Canada, Foxtrap, NL		Jason Foley	709-834-0895
Canada, St. John's, NL		Alex Foley	709-237-5425
Canada, St. John's, NL		Michael Foley	709-738-8109
Chelmsford, Essex UK		Robin French / Peter Squire	-
Colombia, Floridablanca		Sergio Daza Suarez	311-476-6020
Iceland, Reykjavik		Johann Eyvindsson	-
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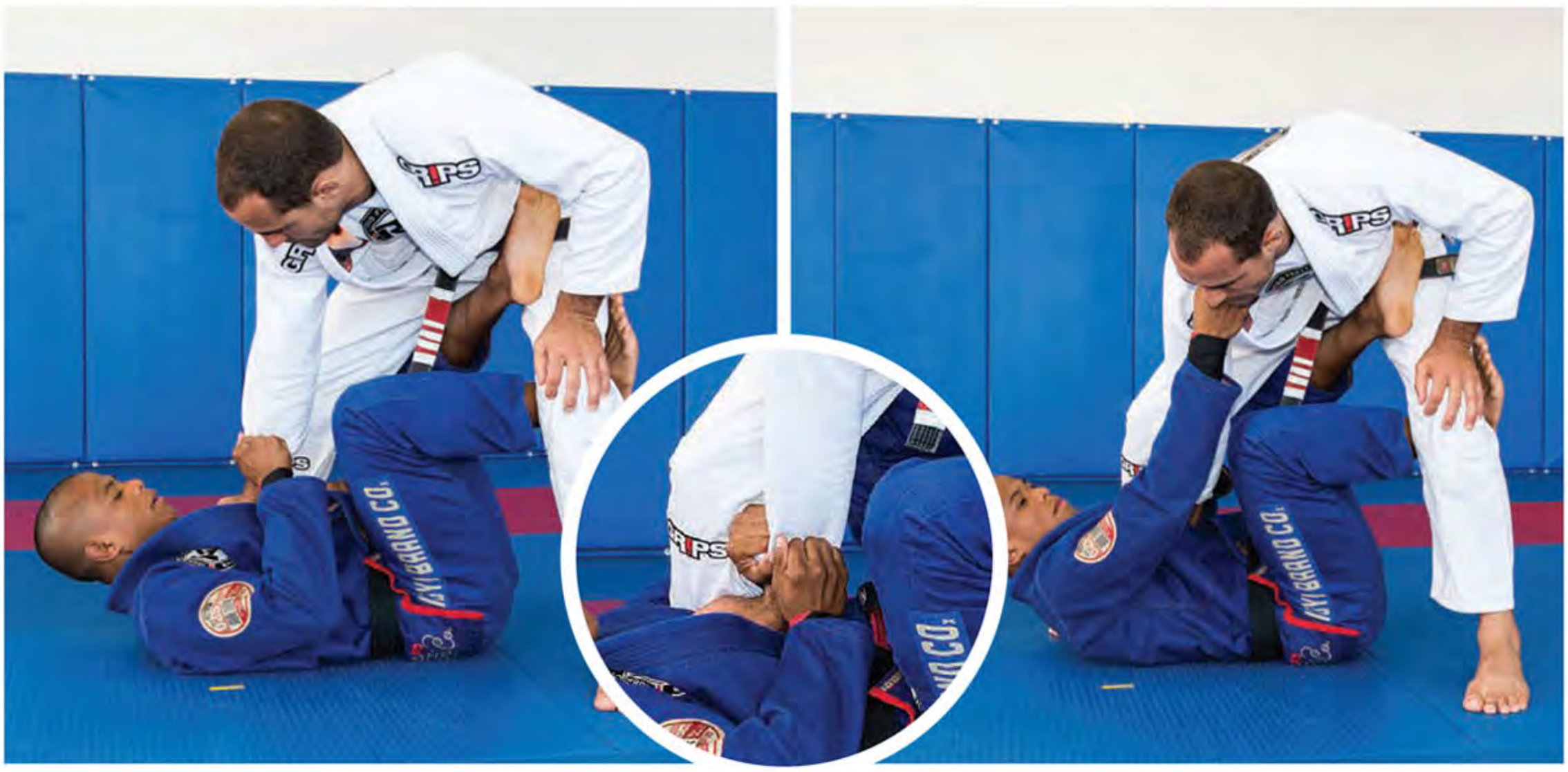
BACK TAKE FROM THE X-GUARD

The X-Guard is fun position that, when executed properly, will generally result in a sweep and the top position. Ian shows a cool way to take his opponent's back from the X-Guard that we think you'll find useful.

STEP 1

Ian starts of on in the X-Guard position with his opponent grabbing a collar. Ian's first move is to grab his opponent's grip and feed it to his inside hand. This is the same side arm that Ian currently is using to control his opponent's leg. He follows this up by then grabbing his opponent's collar. The higher the better.



STEP 2

Next, Ian wants to force his opponent to post their hand on the mat. He does this by pushing his legs out, knocking their balance forward.

STEP 3

His opponent's natural reaction will be to push back up to a postured position. Ian anticipates this. Ian releases his bottom hook and places it on his opponent's belly and lifts his opponent as they try to posture.

STEP 4

Ian then brings them over, placing their hips on the mat. Notice how Ian doesn't let go of any of his opponent's grips yet.

STEP 5

In order to move to his opponent's back, Ian releases the collar grip. He transfers that grip to either his opponent's pants or jacket tail in order to bring them down. He still maintains the hook with his bottom foot in order to control his opponent's leg.

STEP 6

Finally, Ian pushes his opponent's legs to the ground and plants his outside foot for better leverage. When executed correctly, Ian's opponent will fall upright while Ian ends up on their back.

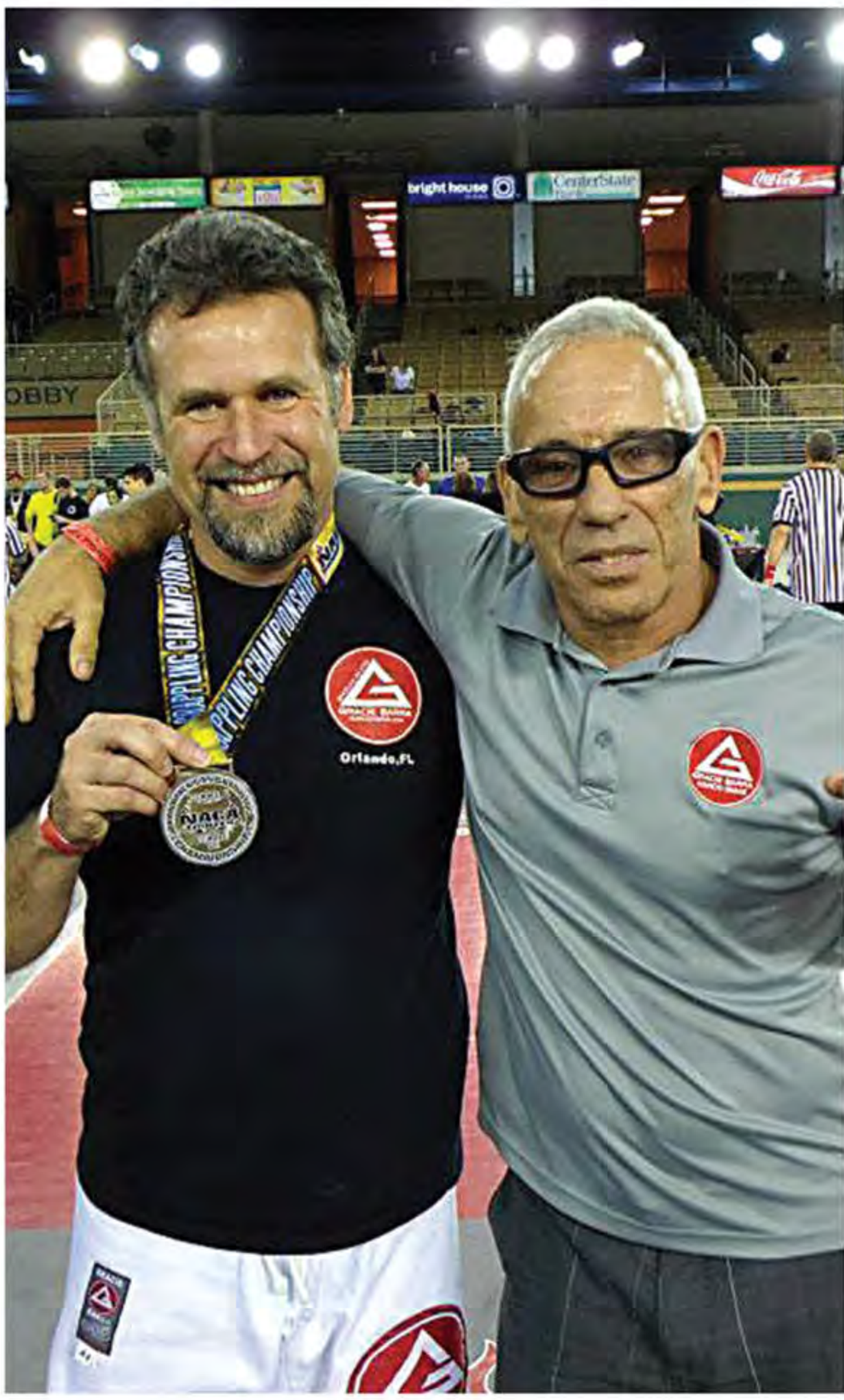
Ian uses the Berimbolo creatively in order to achieve the back position. As jiu-jitsu continues to grow and evolve, we hope that practitioners continue to further develop techniques. If you enjoy this technique, make sure to visit Ian at Rodrigo Frietas BJJ in Manhattan Beach, CA. Keep an eye out for him on the competition circuit as well!

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HEALTHIER EATING FOR JIU-JITSU

WORDS: **RICARDO CASTANEDA**

IMPLEMENTING LONG-TERM CHANGES ONE HABIT AT A TIME

EATING WELL IS IMPORTANT FOR GENERAL HEALTH AND CRITICAL FOR ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE. IF YOU PUT GARBAGE INTO YOUR BODY, YOU WILL PUT GARBAGE OUT. In jiu-jitsu, eating right can have a significant impact in performance and recovery, and the more you train, the more your performance will suffer if you eat poorly. It is crucial for jiu-jitsu practitioners to eat better, and it can be a mental struggle to make the changes necessary for long-term success. Learning how to mitigate the psychological barriers to healthier eating is a great tool to employ in the endeavor to eat, live, and train better. Bad eating habits are difficul to curb, but it can be done with proper execution and patience.



» CHOOSING A DIET

Changing your diet is going to require time and effort. You will have to choose one that works for you and hope it is not too different from what you already eat. Most diets fail from the beginning if they differ too much from what you are accustomed to, and many people attempting a new diet make the mistake of changing too much too soon.

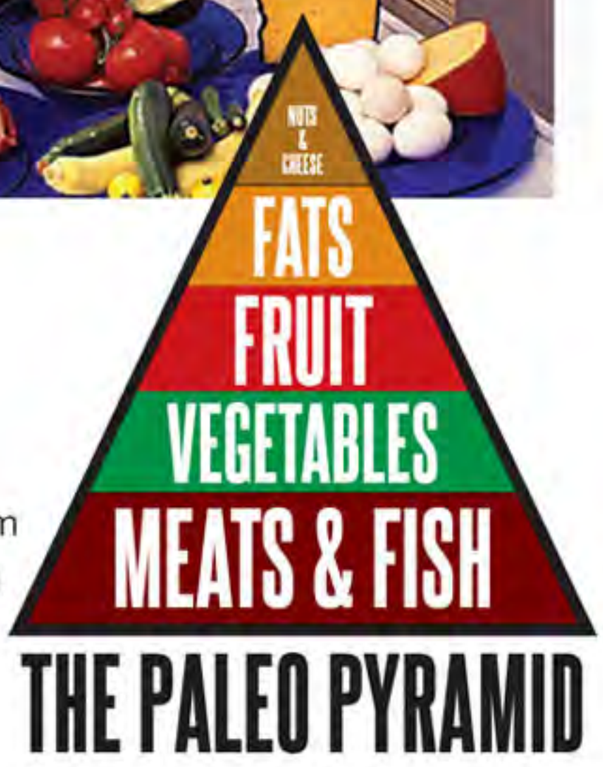
The best available resource when choosing a diet is a consultation with a nutritionist. Having blood work done and identifying your body's individual needs is going to be the most effective strategy when determining what foods you should and should not be eating. A nutritional consultation, however, is an impractical plan of action. If the resources are unavailable to visit a nutritionist, the next best thing is research. There are many diets out there, each with its share of pros, cons, risks and rewards. Find a diet that may best suit your individual needs and experiment with it over the course of thirty days. If you notice any health benefits, stick with it. If not, modify accordingly or switch it up entirely. It never hurts to try, and the more you learn about nutrition, the more awareness you will cultivate. This investment in knowledge and mindfulness of your health will leave you better equipped to make more intelligent dietary decisions in the future.

PROBLEMS WITH DIETING

Diets tend to be generalized. Every person is different. The term "individual differences" is a psychological construct used to suggest that each individual varies substantially on every level. Though we are similar enough for diets to be generalized, there will be some areas that are more or less optimized for us than others. If you are on a low carbohydrate diet, for example, you could feel pretty horribly if you are putting in some serious mat time, training twice daily with no days off. If you are mostly sedentary, training only once a week, then a low carbohydrate diet potentially offers a much better fit. In addition to lifestyle and training regimen, there are other physical and genetic components such as metabolism, height, weight, body mass index, and allergies to consider.

Another obstacle with choosing and implementing a new diet is the change to your eating habits. Changing too much too soon is going to put some extra stress on your body and mind, leading to serious complications. Though you may feel physically better, placing too many restrictions will create some mental anguish from removing too many of the foods you love to eat. Health is important, but how you feel mentally is even more important for adherence. If you are dieting and finding out that you are miserable and depressed because you cannot have anything good, your quality of life will suffer. This can lead to worse dietary decisions.

You should be able to eat whatever you want within reason. Scientific research has shown that willpower is ultimately a mythical force that is unreliable for long-term changes. Therefore, changing habits and behaviors little by little is much better for enduring results.



THE PALEO PYRAMID

» CHANGING HABITS FOR BETTER RESULTS «

Start Small

Creating better eating habits with small, consistent changes is a great way to reprogram your mind to want good, healthy foods without being overwhelmed by unhealthy cravings. Your body has adapted to what you eat, and your body does not like change. Change is stressful. This is why we are so great at adapting to new internal and external environments. Your diet is no different. Make a small change first until it becomes habitual then make another. Keep making small changes until healthy eating becomes second nature.

Eat Whatever You Want

You will need to eat whatever you want. This may sound like the worst advice you have ever received, but it makes sense. Diets are overwhelming if there are too many restrictions. The inability to eat whatever we want creates stress and tension within the body and mind. Willpower becomes useless when the mind is overwhelmed with remembering dietary restrictions and denying what your body craves. If you are training a lot, then your cravings are going to be magnified exponentially, creating more cognitive overload. Diets, then, are a long shot for changing your eating habits successfully.

Cultivate Dietary Awareness

Your body truly does not want anything bad put into it. Sugars and starchy foods, for example, may feel good to eat but are detrimental to your body's internal environment and are ultimately unwanted. Digestion requires great energy which is why you feel sick if you eat a very heavy meal and attempt to train jiu-jitsu or do any other strenuous physical activity. Thanksgiving dinners are also a perfect example of how your body will shut down after indulging too much. Creating awareness and being mindful of how your body feels after meals is a great starting point. If you notice that you are tired and sluggish after eating pasta, use this feeling as a reference for the next time you want to eat pasta. In the future, replace the pasta with a lighter meal, assess how you feel, and modify accordingly.

Do Not Focus on Weight

Unless you have a competition coming up, pay little attention to your weight. The last thing you should be doing is analyzing your diet's success in terms of what the scale reads. If you are training jiu-jitsu or lifting weights, you are probably developing muscle tissue. Muscle tissue is more dense than fat. Losing fat and gaining muscle can tip the scales on the heavier side. If you neglect this fact and pay too much attention to weight, you are setting yourself up for failure. Furthermore, the idea of a goal weight as described by some chart is bogus. These charts very rarely take individual differences into account. Body types, genetics and environments are too inconsistent across the board to rely on basic, generalized charts. Instead of the scale, pay attention to how you feel. Where you feel best on and off the mats is likely close to your ideal weight. Find it, be aware of it, and maintain it.

» TIPS AND TRICKS TO EATING BETTER «

Drink More Water

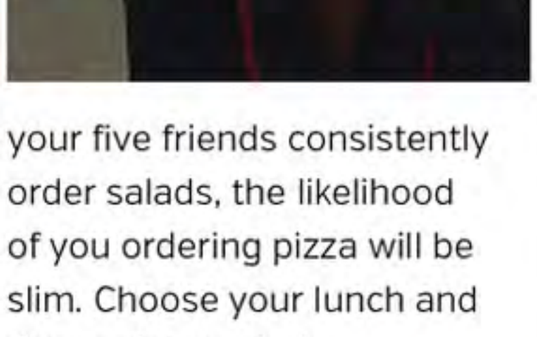
Dehydration can trick your body into thinking that you are hungry when you are not. Drink more water during meals and when you feel hungry. Drink water before giving in to another meal and if you are still hungry after properly hydrating, then eat.

Practice Not Finishing

Nobody likes to waste food, so people will overeat in order to avoid being wasteful. The extra calories consumed are unnecessary and will be stored as fat. Be aware of how much food you consume, stop eating when you are full, and if you happen to have more than you can handle, practice not finishing. It is all right to leave some food behind for the sake of your health and wellness. Carry over any guilt you have for the next meal to prepare only what you can handle.

Spend More Time with People Who Eat Well

There is a saying that we are the average of the five people we spend the most time with. If this is true, spending time with people who eat poorly will lead to poor eating habits. On the other hand, if you begin having meals with friends who are health conscious, you will begin to develop more health conscious habits. If your five friends consistently order salads, the likelihood of you ordering pizza will be slim. Choose your lunch and dinner dates wisely.



Tell Friends and Training Partners

Cognitive dissonance happens when our actions and our attitudes are inconsistent. If you tell a friend you will be cutting out sugars for thirty days, you are going to do your best to cut out sugars. Telling friends and training partners is great for accountability. The more people you tell, the more compelled you will be to make healthier decisions in order to keep your words and behaviors in line. Also, if you do not keep your word, your training partners will make you pay on the mats!

"HEY BRO, MAKE SURE I DON'T EAT TOO MUCH TONIGHT."

BE PATIENT

Like anything worthwhile, developing good eating habits is going to take some time. Just like jiu-jitsu, eating well is a journey. Some people can dial it in better than others and that is OK. You are on your own personal journey. Be aware of your decisions along the way and do not be afraid to make adjustments. Consistent change is implemented slowly with time and effort. Do not be hard on yourself when you eat restricted items and remember to indulge from time to time. Good food is good for the soul. Have some patience and eventually you will get to where you want to be if you stay the course.

USING A HEART RATE MONITOR FOR PERFORMANCE AND HEALTH

WORDS: **WILL SAFFORD**

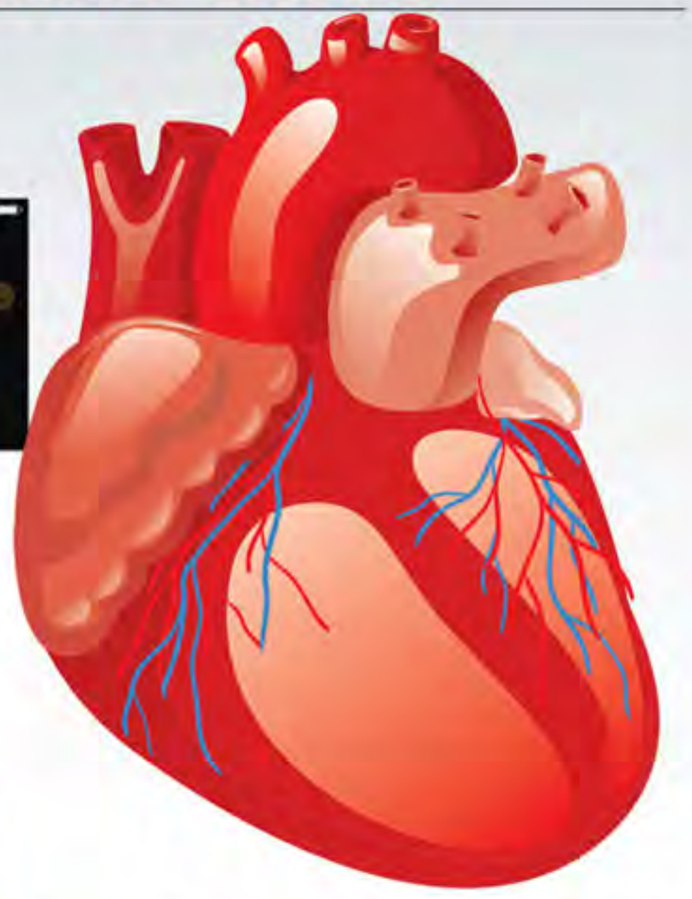
UNDERSTANDING YOUR HEART RATE AND HOW TO MONITOR IT CAN BE JUST WHAT YOU NEED TO IMPROVE YOUR FITNESS LEVEL AND EFFICIENCY ON THE MATS. WITH ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY AND THE EASY ACCESS TO HEART RATE APPS AND DEVICES, YOU'RE NO LONGER IN THE DARK WHEN IT COMES TO MEASURING AND TRACKING YOUR HEART RATE. You can use this information to train your heart in its target zone, optimize recovery, prevent overtraining, and ensure you're making progress toward your goals.

UNDERSTANDING RESTING HEART RATE

It's important to understand a few things about your heart rate before getting into the new techy devices available to athletes. Your heart rate is the number of times your heart beats in a minute. Generally, a normal resting heart rate (RHR) is anywhere from 60 to 100 beats per minute BPM; however, some doctors now believe from 50 to 70 BMP is the ideal range. It's common for athletes to have lower RHRs below 50 BMP, and sometimes even in the 30's for the most elite and best conditioned.

You can measure your RHR the old school way by taking your pulse on your neck or wrist for 60 seconds, or you can use one of the new heart rate measuring apps on your phone. Try the Instant Heart Rate app, it's free and works without the need for any additional equipment. You can also use a chest strap monitor in tandem with your phone or a smartwatch, like the iWatch, that measures your heart rate during activity. Whichever method you choose, just remain consistent with it.

When considering your heart rate, some warning signs to look out for that might indicate you should see a doctor are an abnormally high RHR. Anything over 100 BPM should prompt you to seek medical attention. Also an irregular or racing heartbeat should also be cause for concern.



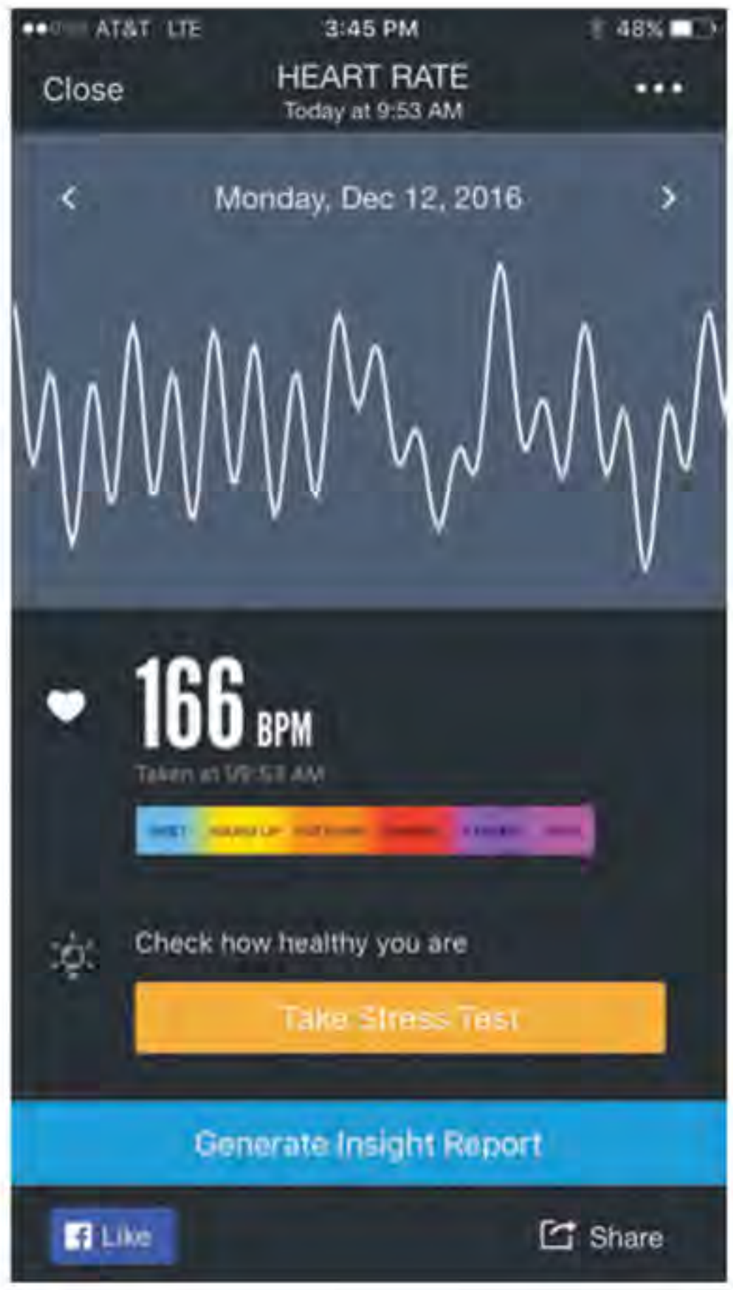
UNDERSTANDING
MAX HEART RATE

Your Max Heart Rate (MHR) is the highest beats per minute your heart can achieve. To reach your MHR would involve an all out effort at 100%, which would not be sustainable for very long. It's important to know this number to determine your target heart rates for exercise. Your MHR is not something that can be improved through exercise, but the amount of time you can sustain at your Max Heart Rate can.

An old school way of determining your MHR is to subtract your age from 220. Another is to multiply your age by 0.7 and subtract that number from 208, or 208 - 0.7(age). The best way is to have it estimated in an exercise science lab, but you can try both formulas to get an idea of where your MHR should be.

UNDERSTANDING
TARGET HEART RATE

Once you've determined these numbers, you can use them to find your target heart rates. Generally, there are three zones you want to work in and track to condition your heart: low, moderate, and high. The low training zone is around 130-150 BMP, or 65% of your MHR, and trains the efficie y of the heart to deliver as much oxygen as possible to the working muscles. The moderate zone is around 160 BPM to 90% of your max heart rate, and where good improvements to aerobic capacity will be made. Much of your training will be done in this zone on the mat. The high training zone is above 90% of your max heart rate and where anaerobic capacity is developed. This is an all out effort and your time spent in this zone must be monitored. Undoubtedly, you'll need to work in this zone to improve your conditioning for jiu-jitsu, but too much time here will lead to overtraining.



» TYPES OF HEART RATE MONITORS

Thanks to technology, we now have more options than ever when purchasing a heart rate monitor (HRM). Monitors have become smaller, more comfortable, and easier to wear. Most of them will connect with your smartphone or home computer to analyze and store results. Best yet, they are now more affordable than ever, with loads of reviews to find the best one for you. Heart rate monitors can range from just under $50 to over $500 for the most advanced with the most features.

Chest-strap HRM

The chest-strap HRM is the most accurate monitor available. It uses a wireless sensor strapped to your chest to send your pulse rate to a receiver, either a watch or smartphone. Although a bit bulkier to wear than other options, the new soft che t-straps have improved comfort and are probably your best option when it comes to jiu-jitsu. They'll stay relatively out of the way and won't interrupt your movement or technique.

Wrist-based HRM

This type of HRM is worn like a watch and uses a sensor on its band or case to detect your pulse. The information can be read right on the watch or sent to your smartphone for analysis. Although slightly less accurate than the chest-strap, these are easier to wear and put on, and can be worn all day for a bird's eye view of your daily heart rate activity. These wouldn't be your best bet during jiu-jitsu training; however, some people wear an elastic gym wristband over their HRM to cover and secure it. Wrist-based HRMs, however, would be better suited for the gym or off the mat.

Smartphone Apps

There are literally hundreds of heart rate monitoring apps, some free and some paid, available on smartphones. If you're not quite ready to purchase a chest or wrist HRM, a smartphone app can do a lot to track your heart rate. Apps can be used to measure your resting heart rate, ideally when you wake up, and keep a daily log. If your RHR is +7 BPM from your average one morning, you are probably overtrained and should take some time off. With a bit more work, you can also track your heart rate after you complete a conditioning set at the gym or a round of sparring on the mat. This will take more effort to track and record but at least you can see if you're entering your target zones without breaking the bank.

HOW TO USE AN HRM

ON THE MAT

If you decide to use a chest-strap HRM when you roll, you can use it in a few ways. First, you can just wear it throughout the session and take a look at the numbers after. A few good numbers to note are your average heart rate and your highest heart rate. If your average heart rate was somewhere in your moderate zone, you'll know you got some productive aerobic conditioning in. If your highest heart rate reached above 90% of your Max Heart Rate, you'll know you did anaerobic work and went near peak intensity. If your monitor allows, you'll want to note how much time was spent above 90%. You also want to track how long it takes for your heart rate to come back to resting after your session - the quicker, the better conditioned you are.

You can also check your HRM between rounds. Ideally, you want your heart rate to drop into the low 140's before starting the next round. If your heart rate can drop quickly after intense effort, that means it's well conditioned. A good goal is a 40 beat drop within one minute.

IN THE GYM

Depending on your goal, you can use a HRM a lot of ways in the gym. If you're trying to maintain or expand your aerobic base, you can spend your time in your low training zone. This will improve your heart's ability to deliver as much oxygen as possible to the working muscles. A HRM will ensure that you're reaching and staying within this zone. You can do the same thing with your moderate and high zones to work your aerobic capacity and anaerobic capacity, respectively.

In addition to analyzing the data after, like in the "On The Mat" example, again paying attention to your average and highest heart rates, you can use the HRM to optimize recovery between sets. If working to build strength and power, allow your heart rate to come down to 115 BPM or below before starting your next set. This will ensure that your muscles have recovered and you can put greater effort forward in the succeeding sets. If working to burn fat and improve your heart's ability to recover, you can use a HRM to interval train. Switching between periods of 85% and 65% of your Max Heart Rate will train your heart in this way.

WRAP UP

We live in a digital age where most data is tracked and analyzed. It makes sense to take the guess work out of training and take a good look at the numbers. A heart rate monitor can be a relatively cheap way to monitor and ensure that your training efforts are paying off. Understanding and training in your different target zones will help you improve certain fitness qualities while preventing over training in the process. If you're a serious competitor concerned with taking your game to the very top, or a hobbyist who wants more direction with your training, a heart rate monitor is an absolute must.

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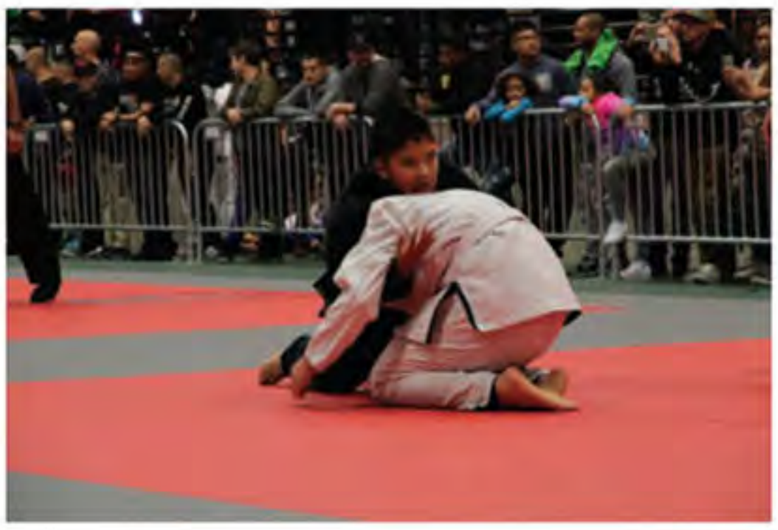
BJJ TOUR
NEVADA

WORDS: **STAFF** | PHOTOS: **ROBERT BAUER**

THE BJJ TOUR MADE IT'S ANNUAL STOP IN THE SILVER STATE AT THE SPORTS CENTER OF LAS VEGAS. THE SPORTS CENTER IS A FULL FEATURED VENUE THAT, ALONG WITH BEING ABLE TO HOST A LARGE JIU-JITSU TOURNAMENT, HAS BATTING CAGES, ROCK CLIMBING, GO CARTING, AND MORE. So, in case your match didn't go as planned, there was something else to do. For every loss, there's a win, so the odds for the competitors were much better than at the slots. After a full day of competition, the dust had settled and the winning teams were known. In the Kids division, it was Cobrinha BJJ taking the overall points and gold total. Second place went to local favorite Cascao Jiu-Jitsu with Gracie Humaita Las Vegas taking home third place.



IN THE COMBINED JUVENILE/ADULT/MASTERS CATEGORY, IT WAS A TIGHT RACE BETWEEN THREE LOCAL SCHOOLS. A TOTAL OF FIVE POINTS SEPARATED THE TOP THREE. In the end, it was Cascao Jiu-Jitsu on top followed by Gracie Humaita Las Vegas, and Carlson Gracie Team. In the Adult Black Belt Pro division, Nathan Mendelsohn of Coalition 95 beat out Gabriel Checco from Gracie Humaita Las Vegas. But Gabriel got his revenge on Nathan by taking the Open Class division.

In case you didn't know, the BJJ Tour puts on events in California, Nevada, Texas, Florida, and Connecticut. In addition to those tour events, it also hosts the grand-daddy of American tournaments: the US Open along with the America Cup and the All Star. For the complete 2017 calendar along with signup deadlines, check out their website at ***BJJTOUR.COM***

GRIPS AND HIPS

INTERVIEW WITH MIKE SAFFAIE

WORDS: **JIM LAWSON** PHOTOS: **PATRICK FLORES**

GRIPS AND HIPS MAY SOUND CATCHY, BUT IT IS THE METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH OF STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING FOR COACH MIKE SAFFAIE WHO HAPPENS TO WORK WITH SOME OF THE TOP ATHLETES IN COMBAT SPORTS. A BROWN BELT HIMSELF UNDER RENER AND RYRON GRACIE, MIKE INCORPORATES THIS "GRIPS AND HIPS" PHILOSOPHY TO HIS OWN WORKOUT PROGRAM AS WELL.

Mike says that the importance of grips and hips in jiu-jitsu comes from the basic element of our art, which is to grab and control our opponent to manipulate their weight and position. One way to maximize this ability is to condition the prime muscle groups most important in accomplishing this feat.

In this article, Mike infuses some of the actual grips that you would use in a grappling match and that you wouldn't find in your traditional workout program. By incorporating balance exercises, bodyweight movements, and bands, Mike is able to focus on the core essentials that increase performance in jiu-jitsu along with everyday function.

STATIC VS EXPLOSIVE

According to Mike, a common error in people's approach towards training is that there's an imbalance towards explosive workouts in the athletic community without recognizing the importance of the "time under tension" concept. Time under tension is the idea of holding weight for certain amounts of time to assist in the development of muscle endurance. Whether it be static positions for a specified amount of time, or carrying additional weight to and from identified locations, time under tension exercises are vital to an athlete's gains in strength

The Workout

The following exercises can be done as individual sets (Indicated in each description) or as a combined circuit. You can also incorporate any of them into your own routine.

HEX-BAR BALANCE BEAM FARMER-WALK

This exercise uses a hex-bar with "Fat Gripz" attachments. A hex-bar help keep the body mechanically aligned with the weight throughout the entire movement. The "Fat Gripz" create added challenge and places an emphasis on grip development. This exercise helps improve muscle development and athletic performance by incorporating the challenge of balancing weight and combining whole body movement in moving the weight. Doing this activates use of the core due to the constant adjustment of weight distribution in the act of balancing. Also, covering distance while balancing in a restricted area tends to slow movement, aiding in the "time under tension" concept. For this demonstration, we used a 2"x4"x10' for our balance beam.

STEP 1

Starting with feet shoulder width apart, squat down to pick up the hex-bar using either a "monkey grip" or standard grip (using the thumb), slightly roll shoulders back, head up (like you're defending a guillotine grip), lift

STEP 2

Keeping your balance, step on the beam and walk to the end. Step off of the beam.

STEP 3

While still holding the weight, perform 5 squats, paying attention to form and keeping the head up.

STEP 4

Rotate 180 clockwise and repeat.

NOTE

Each time you rotate at the end of your walk, alternate between a clockwise and counterclockwise direction for your rotation.

Perform this exercise for 4-5 sets of 5 repetitions, never letting go of the hex-bar throughout the exercise.

Additional Notes

Mike like to use a Hex-Bar because of the anatomically correct position it puts the weights being lifted in relation to the posture of the person lifting, which decreases the risk of injury.

DYNAMIC FARMER-WALK HEX-BAR SQUAT

The purpose of this exercise is to create constant tension of both the hips and grips and move weight using those main muscle groups. To set up this exercise, Mike creates a lane by setting up four stations by placing cones approximately five yards in front of one another. At stations 2, 3, and 4, Mike places on the ground additional plates (we used 10lb plates for this demonstration) on the right and left side f the lane. This exercise is a partner exercise and is very similar to the previous exercise in the manner in which the hex-bar is gripped.

STEP 1

Starting identically to the previous exercise, lift and squat for 5 reps. Once completed, step off with the left foot to the next station. Note that when you step off to the next station, you are to alternate the first step using the left and right foot. (5638)

STEP 2

Once arriving at the next station, have your partner add the weight that has been staged at each end of the bar while you hold the hex-bar.

STEP 3

Squat for 5 reps and repeat the entire movements until the final station is reached.

STEP 4

Once at the final station, turn 180 degrees, add the weight. Perform 5 reps and walk all the way back to the first station. (5662)

STEP 5

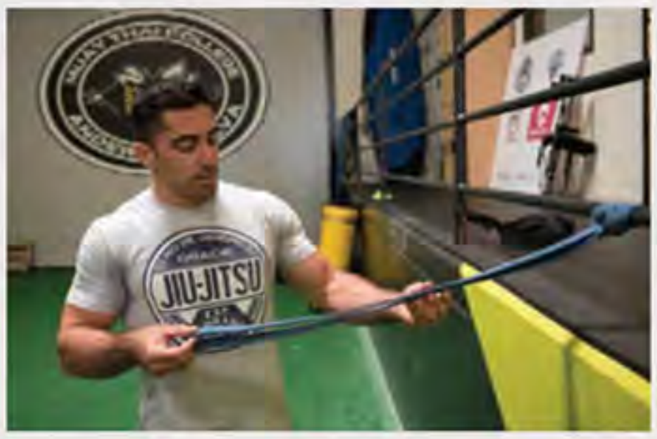
Set down weights and rest for no longer than 5 minutes. Repeat. But this time remove the weight in descending order at each station.

Additional Notes:

Mike likes to keep the sets on this exercise an even number. Usually between 2-6 to maintain a balanced workout.

GABLE GRIP RESISTANCE BAND ROWS

Mike loves using resistance bands for their dynamic nature. Meaning that the resistance throughout the movement varies. In this exercise, Mike uses a Gable Grip, which is a common method of gripping in grappling, and positions the band within different areas of the grip to engage multiple areas of tension. To engage the hips, while establishing his grip on the band, Mike walk away from the band's anchor point to create the starting point of the desired amount of tension. This requires constant engagement of the core area.



STEP 1

Safely anchor a resistance band to a fixed item.

STEP 2

Facing toward the anchor point of the band, use either your right or left hand and reach inside of the band placing one side of the band over your face up palm between the index finger and the thumb.

STEP 3

Bring the other hand in to complete the Gable Grip, establishing a solid grip on the band.

STEP 4

Get in a squat position and back away from the anchor point to create tension and establish a static position, keeping your head up, back straight and legs shoulder width apart.

STEP 5

Once position is established, maintain a static upright position and keeping elbows tight towards the torso, pull the band in towards your solar plexus making sure to squeeze your shoulders (scapulas) together for 8-12 reps. Alternate grip to the other hand and repeat for 4-6 sets.

STEP 6

A variation for this exercise is to establish a Gable Grip without having the band inside the grip but instead around the outside of the hands, doing the same motion and alternating the top hand between each set.

SWAN GRIP MEDICINE BALL RESISTANCE BAND ROWS

Adding a medicine ball to resistance band training, Mike is able to address a unique function in grappling. Mike uses what he calls a "Swan Grip", or more commonly known as, a "frame", to grip the medicine ball. This position helps create a strong foundation on those occasions when we need to establish a strong frame or cross face position against our opponent. Outside of the grip, the range of motion for this exercise is virtually identical to the Gable Grip Resistance Band Rows. For this exercise we used a 14-inch 8lb medicine ball.

STEP 1

Using the same anchor as the Gable Grip Resistance Band Rows, wrap the resistance band vertically around the medicine ball.

STEP 2

Secure the ball between your arms using the "Swan Grip".

STEP 3

Get in a squat position and back away from the anchor point to create tension and establish a static position, keeping your head up, back straight and legs shoulder width apart.

STEP 4

Once position is established, maintain a static upright position making sure to keep elbows tight to your ribcage.

STEP 5

Keeping your fingers open (do not intertwine them), begin pulling the medicine ball into your core using only the fingertips the pull the ball into you towards your solar plexus. Like before, be sure to squeeze your shoulders (scapulas) together for 8-12 reps. Alternate grip to the other hand and repeat for 4-6 sets.

Don't Forget Diet

Nutrition is critical in the success of any exercise program. Without the balance of proper nutrition, you can't expect to make the most optimal of gains. Mike doesn't buy into any single philosophy of diet plan, but instead tries to communicate an idea of balance, cutting out as much sugar as possible and sticking to unprocessed foods. Lean protein and some common sense go a long way when it comes to diet.

NEUTRAL GRIP PULL-UP HOLD

This is a twist on an old classic. The Pull-Up. But with the modification that Mike incorporates, it helps improve endurance rather than explosion. The idea is to have the static strength & endurance to help nullify an opponent's explosive movements. Rather than using reps for this exercise, Mike uses what he calls "55's". The"55's" can be used "progressively" by starting from one second and adding another second up to 10 seconds, which adds up to a total of 55 seconds. You may also work this method in reverse by starting with a 10 second hold and subtracting a second until you work down to a one second hold.

STEP 1

Grab the chin up bar using a neutral grip (thumbs facing you. If a neutral grip bar is not available, you may substitute it with a palms facing, or palms away, grip)

STEP 2

Pull up your bodyweight making sure to keep a tight core, slightly pushing your chest forward.

STEP 3

Once at the top of the pull, hold the position either a ten count or a one count.

STEP 4

Rest. Repeat the movement and either add a count (progressions) or subtract a second (regressions) until you reach an accumulated 55 seconds of time under tension.

Additional Notes

If you can't complete the entire progression of time, try keeping track of time by using your phone and recording your times. That way you can set a goal to reach or beat the next time you perform the exercise. He believes that the more these exercises are performed, not only your muscles but also your mind will be prepared to endure the long durations of controlling your opponent with your grips.

PARTING THOUGHT

During our time with Mike, he made excellent points that's really stuck with me. One thing he said when it comes to supplemental training is that we should look at it from the point of view that "We don't need to be in it [Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu] to be World Champions. We are in it to be happy with our position [of being able to train]. This reflects on our supplemental training as we do in the gym. It does not always need to be brutal. Most of the time it should be challenging but fun. Just like our jiu-jitsu training."

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* The organization may schedule fights for Wednesday, March 15th, if the number of athletes registered exceeds our capacity to fit the event in four days.

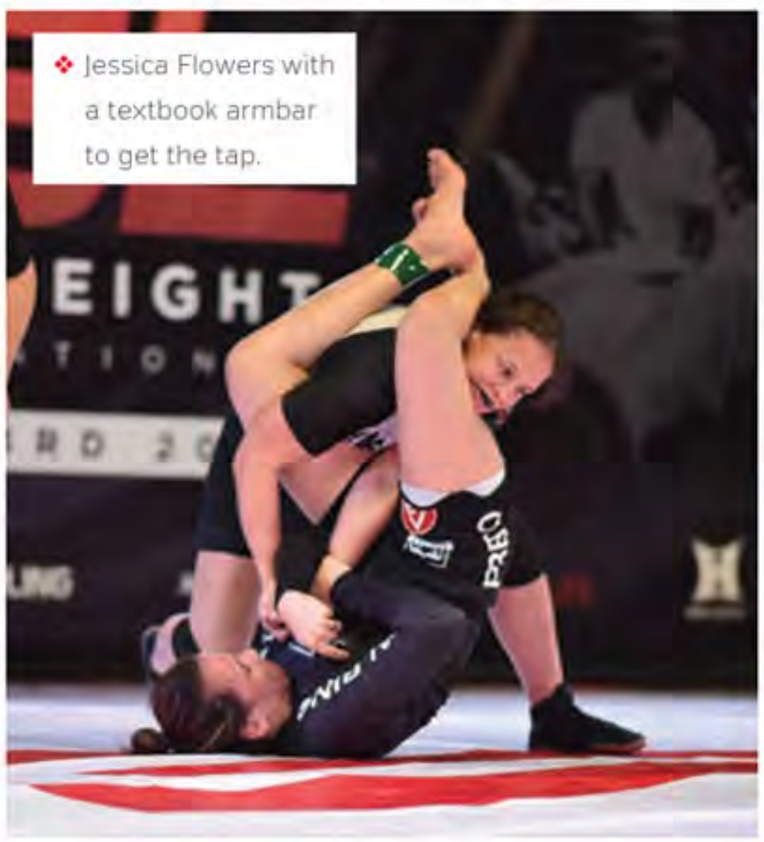
FIVE GRAPPLING SUPER LEAGUE

WORDS: **WILL SAFFORD** | PHOTOS: **KENNY JEWEL**

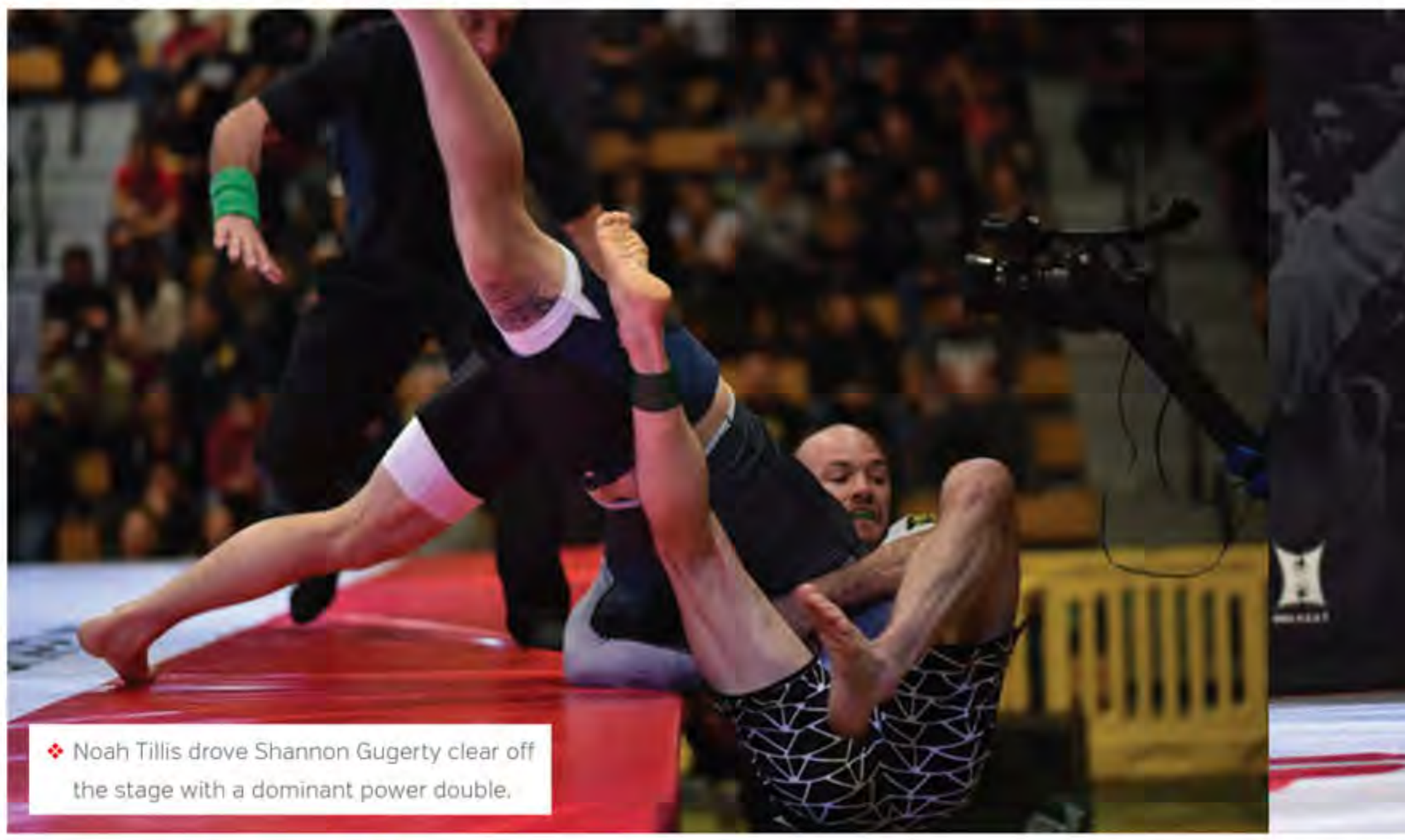
THE FIVE GRAPPLING SUPER LEAGUE RETURNED LAST MONTH, THIS TIME IN SAN DIEGO, AND AS ALWAYS, IT DID NOT DISAPPOINT. WITH NEARLY 30 MATCHES, ALL SUBMISSION-ONLY, THE COMPETITORS CAME WITH THEIR BEST TO PUT ON A GREAT SHOW. Insane back-and-forth juvenile battles, fierce female matches, and a black belt eight-man bracket with lightning fast submissions describe this action-packed evening at Lincoln High School. The tournament was put on by FIVE but produced by Flo Grappling, and the result was a well-organized, entertaining, and professional production. Viewers at home were able to tune in online with multiple camera angles and informative live commentary.

The night began showcasing the future of the sport, featuring teenage match-ups of local Southern California talent. The outlook of sport jiu-jitsu is quite promising as these matches were some of the most entertaining of the evening. The deep understanding of complex techniques and positions that these young competitors possess at such a young age is truly amazing. Combine that with relentless intensity and enormous heart, these matches are a real treat to watch.

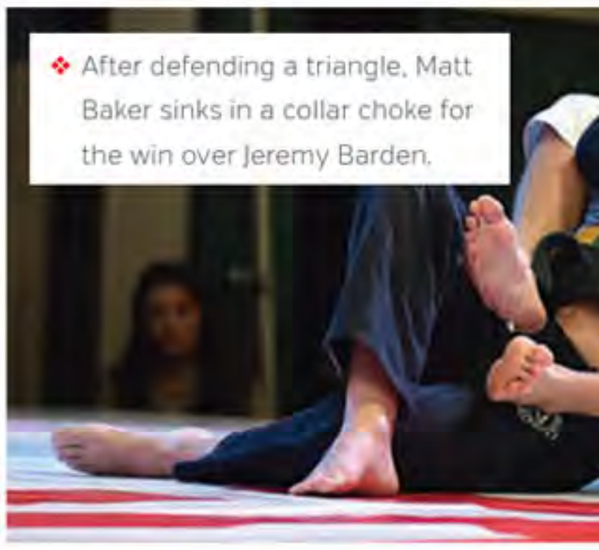
The show continued, progressing through the ranks from blue to purple to brown to black. Superfights featuring local hometown favorites, cross-town rivalries, and rookie and veteran talent filled the bulk of the evening. Gi and no-gi, up-and-comers, and Master's level matches displayed a thorough mix of old-school technique and modern jiu-jitsu. Nine of the 21 undercard matches finished



❖ Jessica Flowers with a textbook armbar to get the tap.



❖ Noah Tillis drove Shannon Gugerty clear off the stage with a dominant power double.



❖ After defending a triangle, Matt Baker sinks in a collar choke for the win over Jeremy Barden.

via submission and some in dramatic fashion. Flying attacks, a theatrical spill off stage by tussling competitors, and a few swollen ankles, busted fingers, and bruised egos led up to the main event of the evening.

The spectacle of the December 3rd FIVE Grappling Super League was the black belt 170 pound eight-man bracket. Eight of the toughest competitors faced off in a sub-only, bracket-style tournament for the title of FIVE Grappling Welterweight Champ. Veteran names like Bill Cooper and Marcelo Mafra were randomly matched up with the likes of rookie and rising talent, including Michael Liera Jr., Brian Morizi, and Sean Roberts. Dillan Danis, the always game Marcelo Garcia black belt, was sidelined due to injury and replaced by his teammate Mansher Khera last minute. The man of the night, however, was none other than Gracie Barra rookie black belt, Edwin Najmi.

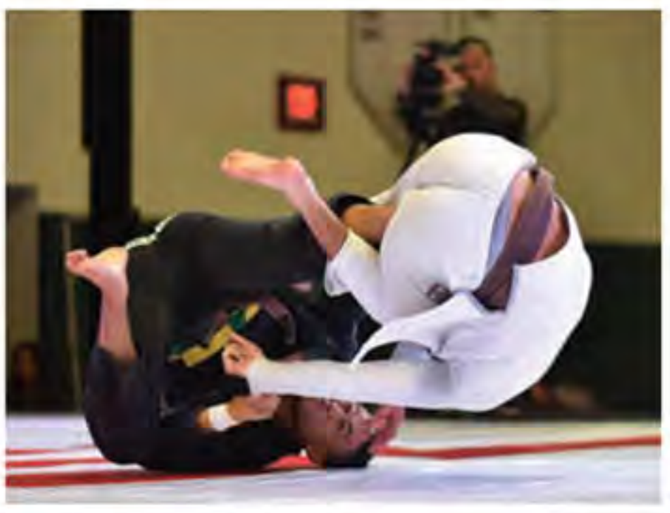
Najmi, who is known for his flying triangle, put on a spectacular display, finishing two of his three fights via submission. He kept the triangle in the bag that night but was able to finish with two of his other signature techniques. The Romulo Barral prodigy bested the experienced Bill Cooper in his opening match with a well placed Darce Choke. After getting the decision over Marcelo Mafra in a tight second match, Najmi met training ally John Combs in the final. Combs, one of the lesser-known competitors of the event, earned the respect of his opponents and the crowd by finishing his first match with a guillotine and showing a dominant command of his second match to get him into the finals. Najmi, however, was too skilled and too fast and quickly got the tap for the Welterweight Title with a vicious Estima Footlock.

FIVE Grappling returns February 17th, 2017, this time in Coral Springs, Florida, for a three-day event including an invitational, open tournament, and World Clan open mat session. FloGrappling will again cover the action so be sure to mark your calendars and tune in! ***FIVEGRAPPLING.COM***

❖ Piter Frank lands the flying armbar to submit Lance Glynn

❖ Edwin Najmi took home the belt after this lightning fast Estima Lock in the final.

❖ Dominique Bell landed this beautiful Tomoe Nage sweep before finishing his opponent with a triangle.



❖ Thomas Keenan got the tap with a vicious straight ankle lock.

ROSS LANDRY

ROSS LANDRY'S LIFE TOOK A SIGNIFICANT TURN FOR THE BETTER WHEN HE DISCOVERED JIU-JITSU IN NOVEMBER OF 2015. HE WAS STUCK IN A TERRIBLE TOXIC JOB THAT HE DESPISED, HIS GIRLFRIEND OF TWO AND A HALF YEARS JUST DUMPED HIM, HE WAS COMPLETELY OUT OF SHAPE AND DEPRESSED JUST BEFORE THE HOLIDAY BLUES WERE STARTING TO SET IN BAD. But luckily for Ross, he made a decision that turned everything around.

AGE: 24 | **HEIGHT:** 5'5"
STARTING WEIGHT: 156 lbs
CURRENT WEIGHT: 130 lbs
HOMETOWN: Thibodaux, Louisiana
HOME SCHOOL: Evolution Training - Guerrilla Jiu Jitsu
INSTRUCTOR: Ernest "Waffle" Ellender and Scotty Smith Jr.
BELT RANK: White - 2 stripes

How did you discover jiu-jitsu?

The first time I ever saw jiu-jitsu was when I was around 10 years old. My dad showed me some Royce Gracie fights from the first UFC events. My dad has never done martial arts before or anything like that, but I'll never forget what he told me. "When they announce those fighters names, whoever is a 'Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu' guy will be the one who wins." Since then, I've been a fan. I would always wrestle around with friends and go for chokes and armlocks on my trampoline in our back yard. I always wanted to go to an actual gym, but I never really had the time or the money for it.

Fast forward to November 2015. I was working at a job where I was miserable, and I was just dumped after 2.5 years by the girl who I thought was "the one." Having suffered from depression and anxiety my whole life, this was definitely the hardest time of my life. I immediately scheduled a meeting with the man who would become my instructor, Ernest "Waffle" Ellender, PhD. I did a lot of research on him and Guerrilla Jiu Jitsu, which is the style created by Dave Camarillo.

What motivates you to train?

I grew up relatively shy, and I was always the smallest kid on the playground. With jiu-jitsu, I've finally found something that I'm good at and that I absolutely love. What always appealed to me about jiu-jitsu was the notion that size does not matter, as long as your technique is there. There's just something so gratifying about rolling with someone nearly twice your size and being able to land a submission because you know you didn't just force it or muscle it. My motivation comes when I think back to the shy, quiet kid I was in elementary school. I would hope that little kid would be proud of where I am today.

What else do you do for physical fitne s?

Off the mats, I do a lot of cardio through biking, swimming and running, and just recently I began lifting mo e.

How have you changed your diet?

I started out weighing about 156 lbs with absolutely no muscle. After my first two months of training, I managed to lose about 10 pounds, but that was while still eating whatever I wanted. I knew I had more weight to lose, so I researched a ton of diets before deciding to give the Ketogenic diet a try. By May 2016, I was so much stronger and had more energy, even though I was almost 25 pounds lighter than when I started. I decided to compete in my first tournament that month, and I took home the gold medal. After the tournament, one of my competitors commented on how strong I was, which took a minute to settle in because I'm pretty sure that was the first time I had ever heard that in my life.

Since then, I've competed in several tournaments, taking home three bronze medals, two silvers, and one more gold.

What's been the biggest challenge so far?

My biggest challenge came in my second competition. I weighed in at 129 pounds, but there was no one in my weight division, so I was moved up to 145 where I faced two super strong, tough, and technical wrestlers. This tournament gave me a big wake-up call on my game and where I was lacking. Wrestling was definitely a weakness of mine, but once the matches got to the ground, I was way more comfortable. I've spent the last few months really focusing on my wrestling as well as on getting stronger.

What's been the best benefit f om the changes you've made?

Jiu-jitsu has done wonders for my self-confidence, and it is the first thing that I can say completely eliminated my anxiety. I was at a rough spot in life when I first started training, and now, I am absolutely the happiest that I have ever been in my life. Even the more stressful aspects of jiu-jitsu, like competing, does not affect me the same way other anxiety triggers have in the past, plus it makes those other triggers much more easy to deal with.

What advice would you give to someone else looking to make the same sort of change?

My advice to anyone looking to make a change in life is to take that leap of faith. I am a complete 180 degrees from where I was this time last year, and it all started when I first walked into the gym. Now I am in the best shape of my life, I'm working at my dream job doing what I love, and I am happier than I have ever been.

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QUEIXINHO

2X NoGi World Champion
3X Pan Am NoGi Champion
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